

**OPINION 6**  
FORGET BLUE/WHITE,  
THINK OF 'NO COLLAR'

**WORLD 8**  
TURKEY DETAINS 10 RETIRED  
ADMIRALS OVER GOVT CRITICISM

**SPORT 12**  
REAL VS LIVERPOOL  
IN CL QUARTERS

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## Maha HM quits after probe order

HC orders PE by CBI into graft charges levelled by Mumbai ex-CP Param Bir

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The much-discussed "letter bomb" dropped by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh on the MVA Government claimed the targeted scalp on Monday as Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh resigned from his post on "moral grounds" within hours of the Bombay High Court ordering a "Preliminary Enquiry" (PE) by the CBI into the serious charges of corruption made against him by Singh.

In a day of swift developments, a HC Division Bench ordered a PE by the CBI on the ground that "there can be no fair, impartial, unbiased and untainted probe, if the same were entrusted to the State police force".

This prompted Deshmukh to put in his papers. He said that in the wake of the High Court's order, "it is not morally prudent on my part to continue in the post".

Given that the ruling NCP will keep the post vacated by Deshmukh, Maharashtra



Anil Deshmukh File photo

Minister and NCP chief Sharad Pawar's confidant Dilip Walse-Patil emerged as the frontrunner to replace the outgoing State Home Minister.

"The police department is under his (Deshmukh's) control and direction. There can be no fair, impartial, unbiased and untainted probe if the same were entrusted to the State police force. As of necessity, the probe has to be entrusted to an independent agency like the

CBI," said a HC Bench comprising Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS Kulkarni.

The HC Bench said that although it did not see an immediate reason to direct registration of an FIR by the CBI based on one of the petitioners Jaishri L Patil's complaint, "interest of justice, in our opinion, would be sufficiently served if the Director, CBI is directed to initiate a preliminary enquiry into the com-

plaint of Dr Patil which has the letter of Param Bir addressed to the Chief Minister, as an annexure".

Alluding to a Press release issued by Deshmukh suggesting that he is not averse to facing any enquiry, the HC Bench said, "Such preliminary enquiry shall be conducted in accordance with law and concluded as early as possible but preferably within 15 (fifteen) days from receipt of a copy of this order".

"Once the preliminary enquiry is complete, the Director, CBI shall be at liberty to decide on the future course of action, also in accordance with law. Should the Director, CBI, see no reason to proceed further, Dr Patil shall be duly informed of the same," the Judges observed.

"It is needless to observe that the preliminary enquiry and further action, if at all required, would proceed uninfluenced by the fact that this court has ordered such an action," the HC Bench added.

In its reasoning for taking cognisance of the allegations of corruption against the State

Home Minister the HC Bench observed, "Prima facie, the issues are such that the very faith of citizens in the functioning of the police department is at stake. If there is any amount of truth in such allegations, certainly it has a direct effect on the citizens' confidence in the police machinery in the State".

"Such allegations, therefore, cannot remain unattended and are required to be looked into in the manner known to law when, prima facie, they indicate commission of a cognisable offence," the HC bench added.

Shortly after the HC passed its order, Deshmukh submitted his resignation to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

"On a plea by Advocate Jayshree Patil, the High Court ordered a Preliminary Inquiry by the CBI. That being the case, it would not be morally prudent on my part to continue as Home Minister. Hence I have voluntarily decided to quit the post. Please relieve me from my post," he said in his resignation letter.

Continued on Page 2

## French site: Dassault paid 1 mn euro to Rafale broker

Report based on probe by agency, says Mediapart, but provides no proof

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh controversy has broken out regarding the Rafale fighter jet deal with allegations of French manufacturer Dassault paying one million Euros as gift to an Indian middleman. The middleman is already facing charges of money laundering in another defence deal in India.

These allegations surfaced in Mediapart — a French investigative website— over the weekend. The report said the information about Dassault paying money to the middleman came out during an investigation by French anti-corruption agency.

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Government deal worth over 7.8 billion Euros in 2016 for 36 Rafale medium multi-role combat aircraft.

About two years back, the deal faced another storm when allegations came up of an Indian defence manufacturer being favoured in the offsets. The Rafale jet deal has a 50 per cent offset clause wherein Dassault has to plough back nearly ₹30,000 crore into the Indian defence industry.

In its report on Sunday, the French publication said the deal involved a 1.1 million Euro payment made by Dassault to a middleman in India. The French conglomerate has claimed the money was used to pay for 50 replicas or models of Rafale jets. But the report has not provided any document or photograph as evidence that

these were delivered. "The company (Dassault) said the money was used to pay for the manufacture of 50 large replica models of Rafale jets, even though the inspectors were given no proof that these models were made," Mediapart reported.

The allegations were first uncovered by the French anti-corruption agency Agence Française Anticorruption (AFA) during their audit of Dassault, according to the report. But the AFA "against all apparent logic" decided not to refer the case to prosecutors, it said.

"As they combed through the 2017 accounts, the AFA inspectors raised an eyebrow when they came across an item of expenditure costing 5,08,925 Euros and entered under the heading 'gifts to clients,'" the AFA report said.

"The sum was indeed huge for a gift. Though French law does not set out precise limits, legal precedents suggest that giving a watch or an expensive meal costing several hundred Euros can be enough to constitute corruption."

Continued on Page 2

## Covid hits Indian Tinseltown

45 members of Ram Setu test +ve, shoot halted

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The coronavirus pandemic seems to have hit the Hindi film industry hard with actors Akshay Kumar, Vicky Kaushal and Bhumi Pednekar among the growing number of Bollywood celebrities to have tested positive for Covid-19.

Meanwhile, 96,556 new Covid-19 cases, 445 related deaths were recorded in India in past 24 hours on Monday night.

With Maharashtra being the most Covid-affected State at 4,52,445 cases, the Mumbai-based entertainment industry, which was trying to return to normalcy post last year's nationwide lockdown, has suffered a major blow.

Kumar, who was one of the first actors to resume film shootings, on Sunday announced that he had tested positive for the virus.

The 53-year-old actor has been filming back-to-back projects, but contracted the virus

five days after starting the production on his action adventure movie "Ram Setu" here.

Not just Kumar, as many as 45 members of the film's crew have also tested positive.

In a statement on Monday, Kumar said he has been admitted to a city hospital as a precautionary measure.

"Thank you everyone for all your warm wishes and prayers, they seem to be working. I am doing fine, but as a precautionary measure under medical advice, I have been hospitalised. I hope to be back home soon. Take care," he tweeted.

BN Tiwari, President, Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE), said

**Relax regulations for opening vax centre, Kejriwal writes to PM**

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking relaxed norms for opening vaccination centres, and asserted that all people here can be vaccinated against the coronavirus within three months if requisite permission is granted.

a crew of nearly 100 was set to begin filming in Madh Island from April 5 but when the mandatory Covid-19 tests were done, 40 junior artistes tested positive.

"They all have been quarantined after testing positive. Out of those, 40 were junior artistes while the rest were Akshay's make up team, their assistants. Now the shooting has been halted indefinitely," Tiwari told PTI.

Hours after it was announced that shooting on "Ram Setu" has been put on hold, actor Bhumi Pednekar took to Instagram to share that she has also tested positive for the virus.

Continued on Page 2

**Micro-containment zones being set up in Delhi, says Jain**

New Delhi: Delhi is witnessing a fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic and to tackle it testing capacity has been ramped up while micro-containment zones are being created where two or more cases are reported, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain said on Monday.

## Maoist chief Keshava Rao planned Bijapur ambush

PLGA's Madvi Hidma executed it: Initial report

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Initial findings into the latest Chhattisgarh Naxal attack suggest CPI(Maoist) chief operational commander Nambala Keshava Rao planned the attack and the ambush was executed by People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) Battalion No. 1 Commander Madvi Hidma.

Rao carries a reward of ₹1 crore on his head and is on the most wanted list of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Chhattisgarh Police. Rao is also known by aliases like Jaganna and Vasava Raju. He hails from Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh and is wanted in several cases of ambushes and encounters against the security forces.

Apart from other cases, he is the mastermind and an



accused in the killing of 15 commandos in Gadchiroli on May 2, 2019, and the murder of TDP Araku (Andhra Pradesh) MLA K Sarveshwar Rao in September 2018 which is being probed by the NIA, officials said.

Estimates also suggest the killing of 23 security officials in Bijapur on Saturday was a reaction to the liquidation of five Naxals, including two women, in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra on March 29 this year by the security forces, they said.

The security agencies could not assess the impending reaction of the Gadchiroli incident which led to a lack of coordi-

nation between the agencies as the Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign (TCOC) of the PLGA under the Central Military Commission of the CPI(Maoist) is underway against the security forces in their respective areas of dominance, sources said.

Continued on Page 2

## Shah revisits strategy to wipe out Maoists

HM holds meet with CM Baghel, security officials

SUJEET KUMAR ■ BIJAPUR



Union Home Minister Amit Shah presided over a key meeting with Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and top security officials on Monday and revisited strategies to eliminate armed Naxals who are orchestrating a series of deadly attacks on troopers in jungles of tribal-dominated sprawling Bastar.

Shah landed in Jagdalpur, headquarters of restive Bastar division, on Monday morning and then held security review scenario in wake of a deadly Maoist attack at a remote hilly patch on 1,000-plus security-men contingent in Bijapur.

The brutal killings of 22 jawans have created a widespread anger in the country and clamour has grown in Chhattisgarh that Central Government must go in for a

decisive operation against the Maoists who are attempting to run a de facto Government in deep forests of Bastar division since late 1980s.

Sources say that Shah and Baghel were of the view that time has come to smoke Naxals out from their forested hide-outs. "Now, we have decided to set up more camps in their (Maoists) bastions and launch regular search and combing operations, now people will see the results soon, Maoists will be eliminated, their days are numbered," remarked a senior Chhattisgarh police officer who was in the meeting.

Continued on Page 2

## CAPSULE

90 VOTERS, 181 VOTES AT A BOOTH! 5 SUSPENDED

Hafong/Guwahati: Total 181 votes were cast in a booth in Assam's Dima Hasao district, even though 90 people were eligible to exercise their franchise, the chief electoral officer said. The booth is in the Hafong constituency, which went to the polls in the second phase on April 1. Hafong witnessed 74 per cent polling. As the incident came to light, the district election officer suspended five poll officials of the booth and proposed a re-poll.

MARCH THIRD WARMEST IN 121 YEARS, SAYS IMD  
New Delhi: March was third warmest in 121 years in terms of monthly average maximum temperature, the IMD on Monday said.

## SC appoints 2 spl judges for trials in 2014 coal scam

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday decided to appoint two judicial officers, Arun Bhardwaj and Sanjay Bansal, as special judges to conduct trials in the sensational coal scam cases pending since 2014 here.

The two judges would replace special judge Bharat Parashar. Special public prosecutor RS Cheema had suggested that it would be appropriate to appoint two special courts instead of one for disposal of 41 pending cases.

Continued on Page 2

## Govt for urgent hearing in ISRO espionage, SC to take it up next week

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday moved the Supreme Court seeking urgent hearing on the report filed by a high-level committee regarding the role of erring police officials in the 1994 espionage case relating to ISRO scientist Nambi Narayanan, who had been acquitted and was eventually awarded ₹50 lakh damages.

Seeking urgent hearing, Solicitor General Tushar told the bench, headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde and also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V

Ramasubramanian, that the report has been filed by the committee and it be considered as this is a "national issue".

The bench said it understands that it is an important matter but "not a very urgent matter". "We will take it up next week," the bench said.

The SC had on September 14, 2018 appointed a three-member panel, headed by its former judge Justice DK Jain, while directing the Kerala Government to cough up ₹50 lakh compensation for compelling Narayanan to undergo "immense humiliation".

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## Wife of Cobra commando urges PM for safe release Daughter too appeals to Modi for safety of her father held hostage by Naxals

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Meenu Manhas, wife of MCRPF Cobra commando Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, is clinging on to faint hope of soon meeting her husband. After "unconfirmed" reports emerged that one of the missing CRPF commandos has been taken hostage by the Maoists in Chhattisgarh and assurance has also been given that he will not be harmed, his wife and five-year-old daughter made a passionate appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to ensure his safe return.

"I want to appeal to the Prime Minister to 'safely' bring back my husband the way



Wife of Rakeshwar Singh Manhas, a Cobra commando missing from the Bastar encounter site with the Naxals, in Jammu on Monday



Brother and daughter of Rakeshwar Singh Manhas in Jammu

Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman was brought back after he was captured during the India-Pak

standoff in 2019," Meenu Manhas told reporters at her home located in Netrakoti village near Barnai in Jammu-Akhnour road.

After the Naxalite ambushed CRPF jawans in Bijapur area of Chhattisgarh on Saturday, the family has been spending sleepless nights.

Sitting in the company of her close relatives, holding her daughter in her lap, Meenu Manhas said, "My husband is fighting for the Nation for the last 10 years. Now it's time for Nation to fight for him". Cobra commando's daughter also appealed to the PM to ensure safe return of her father from the custody of Maoists.

Continued on Page 2

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- 2 Fill in the requested information and choose the type of water test
- 3 Pay the test fee and submit
- 4 Submit water sample in the concerned laboratory
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Chief Minister, Haryana

# Personal details of 61 lakh Fb users in India leaked

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Personal details such as phone numbers of around 6.1 million (61 lakh) Indians on Facebook have allegedly been leaked online and posted on hacking forums, according to a cybersecurity executive.

According to Alon Gal, co-founder and chief technical officer of cybersecurity firm Hudson Rock, personal data of 533 million Facebook users globally - including names, phone numbers and other details - was allegedly leaked online and posted for free on hacking forums.

"All 533,000,000 Facebook records were just leaked for free. This means that if you have a Facebook account, it is extremely likely the phone number used for the account was leaked," Gal has said in a tweet flagging the issue.

A list of countries that was shared in the tweet, showed that information of 6.1 million users from India, 32.3 million from the US, 11.5 million from the UK and 7.3 million from Australia, was part of the leaked data.

When contacted, a Facebook company spokesperson said: "This is old data that was previously reported on in 2019. We found and fixed this issue in August 2019".

Gal said in early 2020, a vulnerability - which enabled seeing the phone number linked to every Facebook account - was exploited, creating a database containing the information of 533 million users across all countries.

He added that details include phone number, Facebook ID and full name and "bad actors will certainly use the information for social engineering, scamming, hacking and marketing".

In the past too, Facebook - which had 2.80 billion monthly active users (MUAs) as of December 31, 2020 - has faced challenges around data security.

In March 2018, Facebook data of over 5.62 lakh Indians was allegedly compromised as UK-based Cambridge Analytica had accessed information of about 87 million users globally. India is among the biggest markets for

Facebook and its group companies, WhatsApp and Instagram. According to government data, India has 53 crore WhatsApp users, 41 crore Facebook users, and 21 crore users of Instagram.

Recently, the Indian government tightened rules governing social media, requiring them to take down contentious content quicker, appoint grievance redressal officers and assist in investigations.

The rules, announced in February, have been designed to curb misuse of social media platforms, mandate that platforms appoint executives to coordinate with law enforcement, remove contentious content flagged by the government or legal order quickly and that user grievances be resolved within 15 days.

The government is also crafting data protection law to ensure privacy, safety and security of user data. These include provisions around the handling of data of adults and minors, storage within the Indian borders and penalties for non-compliance.

# Sec 144 CrPC in all constituencies going to poll in 3rd phase in WB

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Election Commission on Monday described as sensitive all the 31 West Bengal Assembly constituencies where voting will be held in the third phase on Tuesday and imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC in them, an official in it said.

The constituencies are spread over the districts of Howrah (Part I), Hooghly (Part I) and South 24 Parganas (Part II). Polling will be held between 7AM to 6.30PM in 10,871 polling stations in the 31 assembly constituencies. A total 78,52,425 voters in

the three districts will decide the fate of 205 candidates in Tuesday's polling. The prominent among them are BJP leader Swapan Dasgupta, TMC minister Ashima Patra and CPI(M) senior leader Kanti Ganguly contesting from Hooghly, Howrah and South 24 Parganas respectively.

A decision was taken to impose 144 CrPC in all the 16 assembly constituencies of South 24 Parganas (Part II), seven in Howrah (Part I) and eight in Hooghly (Part I). All the booths in the 31 constituencies are considered to be sensitive," the official said. The order restricts unlaw-

ful assembly and movement, holding of public meetings, carrying of weapons, sticks, banners, placards by anybody as well as shouting slogans and using loudspeakers, he clarified.

"It, however, does not apply to any functions religious, wedding or funeral and gathering of people inside polling booths for voting purpose following the rules. It prohibits the assembly of five or more persons, besides imposing other restrictions," he added. The EC also asked the authorities of the three districts to execute all the pending arrest warrants by Monday night and take people accused in various cases into custody, he said.

## French site...

From page 1

The report said to justify this "larger than usual gift" Dassault supplied the AFA with a proforma invoice dated March 30, 2017, which was supplied by an Indian company called Desys Solutions. "This invoice, which related to 50 per cent of the total order, was for the manufacture of 50 models of the Rafale C," the AFA report said. The invoice suggested that Desys was paid 50 per cent of an order worth Euros 1,017,850 for manufacturing of 50 dummy models of the Rafale jets. Each dummy, according to the AFA report, was quoted at a hefty price of 20,357 Euros. Desys Solutions is run by Sushen

Gupta, who is being investigated by the CBI and Enforcement Directorate in the Agusta Westland case involving kickbacks paid in India in a deal for VVIP helicopters. Desys is one of the subcontractors of Dassault in India. Gupta was earlier arrested in 2019 and granted bail in the helicopter deal case. The AFA inspectors asked Dassault for an explanation. "Why had Dassault ordered an Indian company to make models of its own aircraft at 20,000 Euros a plane? Why was this expenditure entered in the accounts as 'a gift to client'? And were these models, each one of which was supposed to be the size of a small car, really ever made?" According to Mediapart, "Dassault was unable to provide the AFA with a single

document showing that these models existed and were delivered, and not even a photograph. The inspectors suspected that this was a bogus purchase designed to hide hidden financial transactions". This is the first part of Mediapart's investigation into a state scandal which also raises questions over the both the justice system and the political authorities. The report said the Dassault agreed to pay one million Euro to a middleman in India just after the signing of the Indo-French contract in 2016. The French audit coincided with a tip received by the French public prosecution services' financial crimes branch, the Parquet National Financier (PNF), in October 2018 which alleged irregularities in the defence deal.

## Covid hits Indian...

From page 1

"I have tested positive for COVID-19. As of today, I have mild symptoms, but am feeling ok and have isolated myself," she wrote on Instagram. Her post was followed by actor Vicky Kaushal's statement revealing his COVID-19 diagnosis. "In spite of all care and precautions, unfortunately, I have tested positive for COVID-19. Following all essential protocols, I am under home quarantine, taking medication as prescribed by my doctor," he said.

Both Pednekar and Kaushal urged their fans and social media followers to adhere to COVID-19 safety protocols. TV actor Ajaz Khan, who was arrested by the NCB last week in connection with a drugs case, also tested positive for the coronavirus, an official said on Monday. Khan's medical examination was conducted on Sunday following which his report came out positive

for the infection, the NCB official said, adding that the actor will be shifted to a hospital.

Officials involved in the probe against Khan will also undergo test for COVID-19. Actor-director Seema Pahwa and Abhijeet Sawant, the winner of the first season of singing reality show "Indian Idol", have also contracted the virus and are under isolation. Earlier in the day, actors Karik Aaryan and Milind Soman tested negative for COVID-19. Govinda and "Bandish Bandits" actor Ritwik Bhownik had tested positive for the virus over the weekend.

Both the artistes are currently quarantining at their homes and have requested those who came in contact with them to get tested. Popular TV actor Rupali Ganguly is also recovering from COVID-19 after getting diagnosed on Saturday. Last month, superstar Aamir Khan, Alia Bhatt, R Madhavan, Ranbir Kapoor, filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali and singer Aditya Narayan among others tested positive for the virus. On March 30, 18 unit members of Madhuri Dixit-judged reality show

"Dance Deewane" had contracted COVID-19, forcing the makers to halt the shoot for a week.

Following the surge in the COVID-19 cases in the state, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maharashtra government on Sunday announced a weekend lockdown and night curfew during the weekdays till April 30, in addition to a slew of other restrictions like closure of private offices, theatres and salons to curb the unprecedented surge in COVID-19 cases. The weekend lockdown will start from 8 pm on Fridays and last till 7 am on Mondays. Besides, prohibitory orders will be in force during daytime on weekdays, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement.

Except the essential services shops, medical shops and grocery shops, all other shops, markets, shopping malls, places of entertainment like theatres, cinema halls, multiplexes, clubs, swimming pools, auditoriums, water parks will remain shut till April 30. Meanwhile, many members of the film fraternity have received their first dose of vaccination.

## Maha HM...

From page 1

Reacting to the resignation by Deshmukh, former Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the State Devendra Fadnavis of the BJP said: "It was expected that Deshmukh would put in his papers after the High Court's orders. Why has there so much delay in the Home Minister putting in his papers? He should have resigned immediately after the former Police Commissioner made allegations of corruption against him and report on the alleged corruption in the transfers and postings of senior police officers submitted by former State Intelligence Commissioner Rashmi Shukla".

Three days after he was shunted and posted in a relatively insignificant post as the

Commandant General of Home Guards, in an eight-page sensational letter written to the Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on March 20 Singh alleged that State Home Minister Deshmukh had asked now arrested and suspended police officer Sachin Vaze last month to "collect" a staggering Rs 100 crore per month from bars, restaurants and other sources.

On his part, State Home Minister Deshmukh - in a tweet put in the evening - debunked Singh's charge and said: "The former Commissioner of Police, Parambir Singh has made false allegations in order to save himself as the involvement of Sachin Vaze in Mukesh Ambani & Mansukh Hirens case is becoming clearer from the investigation carried out so far & threads are leading to Singh as well".

## Shah revisits...

From page 1

He added that the Central and the State Government would spend more funds to develop road infrastructure and other facilities in deep jungles of Bastar including Bijapur and Sukma to allow forces to reach to Maoists hideouts easily. Shah visited a CRPF camp at Bijapur's Basaguda with Baghel where he interacted freely with jawans and assured them that the Indian Government was determined to put an end to Maoist militancy forever. Security personnel at the camp informed Shah that forces have been regularly combing jungle areas which were early described as 'no-go-area' and Maoists are now carrying out attacks only to save some of their last militants. Shah also laid wreath on mortal remains of martyred jawans at Jagdalpur police line and later met injured cops at private hospitals in Raipur with a clear message that India would never tolerate such attack.

# IAF helicopters begin firefighting operations in Uttarakhand forests

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

IAF helicopters began their firefighting operations in Uttarakhand on Monday, conducting several sorties over the burning forests in the Garhwal region to spray water over the raging flames and extinguish them.

A total of 85 more forest fire incidents occurred in the state over the last 24 hours, according to data of the forest department.

An IAF helicopter with a bucket carrying around 5,000 litres of water from the Tehri lake doused the flaming forests of Gaja, Pokhri and Quili in the district, Narendra Nagar Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) and the nodal officer of the operation, DS Meena, said.

Two sorties were made, first to conduct a recce of the affected areas in Tehri district, followed by two more to pour 10,000 litres of water over

active spots in the Narendra Nagar forest division, he said.

The operation was stopped later in the afternoon as the weather was not conducive, officials said, adding that it will be resumed on Tuesday.

Sorties will also be conducted by the Indian Air Force helicopters on Tuesday to pour water over the burning forests of Thauldhar block of the district, Tehri DFO Koko Rose said.

Boating activities in the Tehri lake were kept suspended during the day so that the IAF helicopters can collect water from the lake in an uninterrupted way.

Another IAF helicopter stationed at Haldwani for the purpose could not make sorties due to low visibility caused by a thick cover of smoke emanating from the smouldering forests, Kumaon DFO Tejaswini Patil Dhakate said.

# Free health check-up camp held at Kailash hospital in Noida

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Kailash Super Speciality hospital in Noida on Sunday organised a free health check-up camp which was supervised by doctors from cardiology, orthopedics, gynecologists and general physicians.

The medical experts examined more than 100 persons during the one-day health camp at Mahagun Modern society, Sector 78, Noida.

Society president Sandeep Chauhna, Vice president Ravit

Singh, attended the camp, which was coordinated by advisor to Kailash Hospital Pushpendra.

"During the camp, the hospital authorities o provided free check-up for blood sugar, blood pressure, ECG, oxygen level and other important tests," said Pushpendra. The main organizer of the Camp Shiv Bhardwaj said at a time when Covid-19 was on the rampage, this was an effort to reach out to people in the need of basic health facilities and check-up.

## Maoist chief Keshava...

From page 1

Meanwhile, the deadly ambush against the security forces was executed despite the top officials of the CRPF including Inspector General (Operations) of CRPF, Nalin Prabhat and Special DG Zulfiqar Hassan besides Adviser in the Union Home Ministry K Vijay Kumar were camping in Chhattisgarh for the last few days for the operations against the ultras. DG CRPF Kuldeep Singh had also visited the State in the run-up to the operation against the Naxals that turned out to be a trap, sources said. Incidentally, Prabhat was DIG with CRPF who had planned an operation in 2010 in Chintalnar in which 76 CRPF personnel were killed, a figure which is the highest casualty so far for the paramilitary.

**कानपुर विद्युत आपूर्ति कम्पनी लिमिटेड 14/71, सिविल लाइन्स "केसा हाउस" कानपुर, अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा ई-निविदा पृथक-पृथक दो भागों में निम्न सामग्रियों हेतु केस्को ई-निविदा वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर आमंत्रित की जाती है।**

ई-निविदा प्रपत्र पूर्ण कर निविदादाताओं द्वारा वेबसाइट पर खुलने की तिथि के अपराह्न 12:00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है।

उक्त ई-निविदा उसी दिन 15:00 बजे से 17:00 बजे तक वेबसाइट पर सार्वजनिक रूप से खोली जायेगी।

उक्त तिथि को अवकाश घोषित होने पर निविदायें अगले कार्यदिवस में नियत समय पर खोली जायेगी।

ई-निविदा धनराशि का भुगतान आरटीओएस (खाता सं० 628085018266 आईएफएससी-ICIC0006288) के रूप में, केस्को कानपुर के पक्ष में देय होगी।

ई-निविदा प्रपत्र निविदा खुलने की तिथि पर दिये गये समय से दो घण्टे पूर्व तक वेबसाइट से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। वेबसाइट पर निविदा प्रपत्रों के साथ यूटीओआर की स्कैन प्रतियाँ अपलोड करना अनिवार्य है। ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग में धरोहर धनराशि का भुगतान सिर्फ आरटीओएस के माध्यम से ही स्वीकार किया जायेगा जो कि उपरोक्त खाते में देय होगी एवं निविदा प्रपत्र के प्रथम भाग में निर्धारित पीओआर एवं तकनीकी अतिरिक्त होने तथा निविदा के द्वितीय भाग में दरे एवं व्यवसायिक शर्तें होंगी, बिना धरोहर धनराशि के तथा सार्वजनिक निविदायें खोली/स्वीकार नहीं की जायेगी।

निविदा सं० 01 / आईटीओसेल/21-22 विवरण Providing Services of SMS gateway on postpaid basis for 1 years धरोहर धनराशि (₹) 88,000/- निविदा धनराशि ₹ में (दो के साथ) 5900/- ई-निविदा अपलोड करने एवं खोलने की तिथि 21.04.2021 उपरोक्त ई-निविदा की पूर्ण प्रक्रिया केस्को की ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> के माध्यम से की जायेगी। तकनीकी योग्यता पूरा न करने वाले निविदादाता के निविदा पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। सामग्री क्रय की मात्रा घट बढ़ सकती है। अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के पास बिना कोई कारण बताये किसी एक अथवा समस्त निविदाओं को स्वीकृत/अस्वीकृत करने का पूर्ण अधिकार सुरक्षित होगा।

उक्त ई-निविदा में यदि कोई शुद्धीकरण या विस्तारण होता है तो वह ई-निविदा वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर अपलोड किया जायेगा, जिसका अलग से प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। (अधिसूची अभियन्ता) आईटीओसेल पत्रांक-607 / आईटीओसेल / 21-22 / ई-निविदा सं०-01 दिनांक 5.4.2021 राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचायें।

**छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल पर्यावास भवन सेक्टर - 19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)**

**// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //**

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी ई.आई.ई. नोटिफिकेशन, 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के तहत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स कुम्हारी ब्रिक्स अर्थ क्ले क्वारी माईन एवं फिक्सड चिमनी ब्रिक्स प्लांट (प्रो. श्री नरेन्द्र कुमार प्रिवानो), ग्राम-कुम्हारी, तहसील-धमधा, जिला-दुर्ग (छ.ग.) स्थित खसरा क्रमांक 1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1270/1, 1270/3, 1271, 1272, 1278/2, 1279, 1280 एवं 1281 कुल लीज क्षेत्र 4.625 हेक्टेयर में गौण खनिज उखनन क्षमता-3,992.73 घनमीटर प्रतिवर्ष (ईट उत्पादन 37,99,321 नग प्रतिवर्ष) के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति बाबत लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 09/04/2021, समय दोपहर 12:00 बजे स्थान-नगर पालिका परिषद कुम्हारी के सांस्कृतिक भवन में ग्राम-कुम्हारी, तहसील-धमधा, जिला-दुर्ग (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई थी, जिसे कार्यालय कांकेट, जिला-दुर्ग के आदेश पत्र क्रमांक 17/कले./सा.लि./2021 दुर्ग, दिनांक 05/04/2021 के द्वारा अपरिहार्य कारणों से स्थगित किया गया है।

**सदस्य सचिव**  
**छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल,**  
**नया रायपुर अटल नगर रायपुर (छ.ग.)**

## Wife of Cobra...

From page 1

Referring to her last conversation with her husband late Friday night, Meenu said, "We spoke to each other late Friday night. He was packing his food before leaving for an operational duty. He only informed me, he was going out on an operation. Said will call back after returning to the base camp".

"Since then I have not heard anything from him. Whatever information is flowing it is only through news channels. No one from the government machinery or CRPF has so far informed us anything about the whereabouts of my husband. I am hoping to meet him soon and praying for his safe return," she repeatedly told reporters.

Rakeshwar Singh Manhas has been serving the CRPF since March 2011 and had joined the posting in Chhattisgarh only three months ago.

## SC appoints...

From page 1

A Bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde took note of a letter from the Delhi High Court's Registrar General that permission be granted to nominate or post another suitable presiding judicial officer as special judge in place of Parashar.

Special public prosecutor RS Cheema had suggested that it would be appropriate to appoint two special courts instead of one for disposal of 41 pending cases.

The bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, noted the concurrence of the Central government to the proposal and went on to appoint Bhardwaj and Bansal as special judges to preside over two courts to deal with the cases.

"Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General appearing for the respondent-Union of India, agrees to the aforesaid suggestion. We have perused the names of five officers of Delhi Higher Judicial Service forwarded by the Registrar General of the Delhi High Court on the recommendation made by the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court vide letter dated 22.03.2021.

"We consider it appropriate to nominate Arun Bhardwaj and Sanjay Bansal as Presiding Judges of Special Court Nos.1 and 2 respectively. They shall be appointed in the order of their seniority. Ordered accordingly," the bench said in the order. The bench considered the five names of judicial officers provided by the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and said that it assumed that "all the judges are good".

It has now posted next

week the another plea of Cheema seeking discharge as public prosecutor from trying money laundering cases lodged by Enforcement Directorate in coal scam cases.

Cheema, however, has agreed to act as the special public prosecutor in cases lodged by CBI in coal scam.

The apex court on March 15 had requested the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court to provide names of five trial court judges of "high caliber and absolute integrity" for appointing one of them as the special judge to replace Parashar.

It had on March 15 said, "We find that Bharat Parashar who has acted as a Special Judge (PC Act), (CBI)-07, Patiala House Court, New Delhi, needs to be replaced, as he has now completed more than 6 years in the same post after having been posted as

Special Judge in the above mentioned court since August 19, 2014."

"We accordingly request the Chief Justice, Delhi High Court to give us a panel of names of about five judges of a high caliber and absolute integrity to enable us to suggest an appropriate replacement for Bharat Parashar, Special Judge," the bench had said.

The bench took note of the submission of special public prosecutor Cheema that the law contemplates the disposal of such cases has to be ensured in two years which may be extended up to four times by a period of six months each.

The top court in 2014 had quashed 214 coal blocks allocated by the Centre between 1993 and 2010 after taking note of PILs, including one filed by lawyer M L Sharma, and had ordered trial by a special CBI Judge.

rowing effect" on his mind, should face "legal consequences".

The CBI, while giving clean chit to the scientist, had said that Siby Mathews had left "the entire investigation to IB surrendering his duties" and ordered indiscriminate arrest of the scientist and others without adequate evidence being on record.

The case had caught attention in October 1994, when Maldivian national Rasheeda was arrested in Thiruvananthapuram for allegedly obtaining secret drawings of ISRO rocket engines to sell to Pakistan.

Narayanan, the then director of the cryogenic project at ISRO, was arrested along with the then ISRO Deputy Director D Sasikumaran, and Fousiya Hasana, a Maldivian friend of Rasheeda.

**North Eastern Railway** Tender Notice No. 01 Date : 05.04.2021  
Website : [www.ner.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ner.indianrailways.gov.in) Fax No. : 0551-2200721  
E-mail : [cos@ner.railnet.gov.in](mailto:cos@ner.railnet.gov.in)

**Invitation of tenders through e-Procurement system**

Principal Chief Material Manager, North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur, and on behalf of The President of India, invites tenders through e-Procurement system for the supply of the following items. Complete description of the item and other condition are available on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Item No.	Tender Number	Due on	Brief Description of Stores	Reserved to be procured from	Qty. Required	Earnest Money (Rs.)
1	22201087	30.04.2021	Traction centre Elastic Joint etc.	ICF	3000 Nos.	176790/-
2	28211043A	30.04.2021	High performance anti corrosion epoxy coating etc.	RDSO	28060 Kgs.	105950/-
3	22190950D	03.05.2021	Foot step arrangement complete etc.	--	3604 Nos.	123550/-
4	22201116	03.05.2021	Air brake pipes etc.	RDSO	578 Set	157310/-
5	22201142A	04.05.2021	High capacity etc.	RDSO	249 Nos.	115510/-
6	22201192A	10.05.2021	Ball joint traction lever etc.	ICF	12632 Nos.	538700/-

Principal Chief Material Manager  
N.E. Railway Gorakhpur  
"About any Passenger Amentiy complaint SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955"

**Never travel on roof and foot boards**

## Govt for...

From page 1

It had ordered setting up of the committee to take appropriate steps against the erring officials for causing "tremendous harassment" and "immeasurable anguish" to Narayanan and had directed the Centre and state government to nominate one officer each in the panel.

Termining the police action against the ex-scientist of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as a "psycho-pathological treatment", the apex court had in September 2018 said that his "liberty and dignity", basic to his human rights, were jeopardised as he was taken into custody and, eventually, despite all the glory of the past, was com-

pelled to face "cynical abhorrence".

The espionage case, which had hit the headlines in 1994, pertained to allegations of transfer of certain confidential documents on India's space programme to foreign countries by two scientists and four others, including two Maldivian women.

The scientist was arrested when the Congress was heading the government in Kerala. The three-member investigation panel submitted its report in a sealed cover to the apex court recently.

The CBI, in its probe, had held that the then top police officials in Kerala were responsible for Narayanan's illegal arrest.

The case also had its political fallout, with a section in the Congress targeting the then Chief Minister late K

Karunakaran over the issue, that eventually led to his resignation.

Over a period of almost two-and-a-half years, the panel headed by Justice Jain examined the circumstances leading to the arrest.

The 79-year-old former scientist, who was given a clean chit by the CBI, had earlier said that the Kerala police had "fabricated" the case and the technology he was accused to have stolen and sold in the 1994 case did not even exist at that time.

Narayanan had approached the apex court against a Kerala High Court judgement that said no action needed to be taken against former DGP Siby Mathews, who was then heading the SIT probe team, and two retired superintendents of police K K Joshua and S Vijayan, who were later held responsible by

the CBI for the scientist's illegal arrest.

"There can be no scintilla of doubt that the appellant, a successful scientist having national reputation, has been compelled to undergo immense humiliation. The lackadaisical attitude of the state police to arrest anyone and put him in police custody has made the appellant to suffer the ignominy," the apex court had said in its September 2018 order.

"The dignity of a person gets shocked when psycho-pathological treatment is meted out to him. A human being cries for justice when he feels that the insensible act has crucified his self-respect," the top court had said.

It had accepted Narayanan's plea that the authorities, who were responsible for causing such a "har-

# COVID-19 CM writes to PM, seeks relaxation on jab rules

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking relaxation in the rules pertaining to the opening of vaccination centers and removing the age limit on vaccination, in view of controlling the fast-rising cases of Covid-19 across the country including Delhi.

"The increase in the rate of transition of corona across the country has presented new concerns and challenges. The vaccination campaign needs to move more rapidly in this context. If rules for opening new centers are simplified and everyone is allowed to be vaccinated irrespective of age, then the Delhi Government can vaccinate all Delhi residents within three months. In the fight against corona, the Delhi Government has had the support of the Centre at every step," he said.

Kejriwal said "It is a matter of great pride that India has developed an effective vaccine in record time owing to the brilliant talent and hard work of its scientists, experts, and doctors in the global war against the COVID-19 pandemic. It has earned great praise for Indian scientists, experts and doctors from all over the world."



"The past few weeks have seen a rapid increase in the transition of Corona in various areas of the country. This has presented new concerns and challenges, particularly to the vaccination campaign. The rapid spread of infection between immunization campaigns in this way suggests that we must move the vaccination campaign forward in a swifter manner," he wrote in the letter.

Elaborating it further, he said "The process needs to be done at two levels. First, there is an urgent need to increase the number of vaccination centers. For this, the pre-conditions placed by the Centre regarding vaccination centers need to be relaxed. For example, according to the instructions of the Central government, vaccination centers can only be set up in hospitals or dispensaries."

"Initially, the provision to set up vaccination centers in hospitals or dispensaries and this was done to ensure that if

someone had an adverse reaction to the vaccine, they could be treated immediately in the hospital. The vaccination drive in the last three months has shown that the vaccine is safe. It is, therefore, requested that this condition be removed so that large-scale vaccination centers can be built in schools, community centers, and other places. In this instance, for example, arrangements for ambulances, etc will be made at every centre," he said.

"Secondly, it should be made available to everyone by removing the age limit to immunization. Except for those who cannot get vaccinated medically, we should start vaccinating everyone. This will remove the hesitation among people and increase the number of people getting vaccinated. The more people get vaccinated, the more we will be able to reduce the spread of the disease," he added.

"If the rules for opening new vaccination centers are simplified, everyone is allowed to be vaccinated irrespective of age, and vaccines are provided in appropriate quantities, then the Delhi government will administer the vaccine to all residents of Delhi within 3 months. The Delhi government is fully prepared for this," the Chief Minister emphasized in his letter.

## Micro-containment zones, 80K tests daily to contain spread in Capital: Jain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the cases of Covid-19 increasing in the national Capital, the Delhi Government is taking the concerned measures to contain the spread including creation of micro-containment zones and conducting more than 80,000 tests on a daily basis, Delhi's Health Minister Satyendar Jain said.

Talking about the measures taken by the Delhi Government, Jain said that random tests are being done at a fast pace. "The micro-containment zones are being created wherever 2-3 cases of coronavirus are detected. Delhi Government is taking appropriate measures, the most significant one being boosting the daily testing capacity. Around 80-90,000 tests are being done each day. Moreover, among the infected patients, asymptomatic, and mildly symptomatic patients are being home isolated, and moderate to severe cases are being isolated and treated in the hospitals," he said.

Genome tracing is also being carried out and about 30 people are being traced for the coronavirus infection, he said. Responding to a question about the increased number of Covid-19 cases and subsequent deaths caused by the Coronavirus, Jain said, "The severity of the cases is comparatively lower as compared to the previous coronavirus waves. This is the fourth wave in Delhi and the second wave in the country."

Responding to a question about variants, Jain said, "Let scientists look over the variants and it would not make much difference. Scientists say that the current corona variant is spreading at a fast pace with less severity and the mortality rate is also low. The central lab is doing the study on the variants."

He also appealed to the people who have recovered from the coronavirus infection to donate plasma in large numbers. "I appeal to all the citizens of Delhi to follow covid-appropriate behaviour and not show any negligence with regard to it. I believe that taking necessary precautions is of utmost importance to stop the infection of Coronavirus."

Delhi recorded 4,033 positive covid cases on Sunday and the positivity rate was 4.64 per cent.

## AAP raps Centre for export of shots, alleges Indian citizens being ignored

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and its national spokesperson, Raghav Chadha, on Monday, questioned the Centre's decision to continue exporting of Covid-19 vaccines by ignoring the need and safety of its own citizens.

Chadha said that India has exported more doses of the Covid-19 vaccine than it has vaccinated its own citizens. "India has thus far exported 64.5 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccines to 84 countries, and it appears that the Narendra Modi Government is more concerned about its international image," he said.

The AAP leader accused the Centre of not focusing on inoculation but on exporting this life-saving drug. "India has exported the Covid-19 vaccine to Nigeria, Zambia, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, St Lucia, Bahrain, Morocco, Ghana, Angola, Senegal, Mali, Sudan, Uganda, Jamaica, Bolivia, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Tajikistan and many other countries. It appears that what these countries think of PM Narendra Modi is more important rather than what India's own people think of him. The Centre is ignoring the vaccine 'suraksha kavach' to its own citizens."

Talking about the slow rate of vaccination in India, the national spokesperson said, "I would like to inform you that the rate at which our 135 crore population is being vaccinated, it will take 15 years to vaccinate the entire population. Some scientists have further said that if 70 per cent of

India's population is vaccinated, COVID-19 can be brought under control. If this continues at the same rate, the Indian government will take 10 years to vaccinate even 70 per cent of India's population," he said.

Chadha further said, "Where exactly is the Centre's 'Vaccine Nationalism'? Even the MEA has gone to the extent of saying that India is competing with China as to who exports more vaccines and said that it is two steps ahead of China. We are not giving the vaccine 'suraksha kavach' to our citizens. The Centre is so caught up with the vaccine export drive; it is exporting to even development nations who have ample access to resources. A prime example of this is the United Kingdom to whom, as per an agreement, India will export 10 million doses."

The AAP leader further said, "It will be a matter of great pride should India become a vaccine superpower, but the priority ought to be our own people. Maharashtra has entered into a state-wide lockdown; there are people dying in Punjab. COVID-19 has once again reared its ugly head and the one weapon we have this time is the vaccine but the Centre is not focusing on inoculation but exporting this life-saving drug."

Responding to the allegation, Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said that the statement of the AAP leader reflects the petty political mindset with which the party works.

"The Government of India is all out to vaccinate fellow Indians in phases to contain the spread of COVID-19," he added.

## Massive surge in Covid cases: 3,548 test +ve in city on Monday

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 3,548 coronavirus cases on Monday, while the positivity rate rose to 5.54 percent amid a massive surge in cases recorded over the past few weeks.

According to the health department, the number of cumulative cases rose to, while more deaths took the toll to 6,79,962. The Government conducted a total of 64,003 tests, including 43,960 RT-PCR tests the bulletin said.

The number of people under home isolation rose to 7983 and the containment zones rose to 3090, it said.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said on Friday that Delhi is encountering the fourth wave of COVID-19 infection but there is no need of imposing lockdown.

The chief minister urged the Centre to allow states to undertake mass-level vaccination. He had also suggested that the Centre should lift the age bar of 45 years for vaccination to pave the way for mass-level inoculation. Kejriwal also appealed to the people to wear face masks, maintain social distancing and regularly wash hands to prevent the spread of the virus.

# Gurugram admin on alert as Covid-19 cases surge

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Amidst a surge in number of Covid-19 cases in Gurugram, the district administration on Monday decided to take effective measures to put a break on the spread of infection in the district.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Yash Garg convened a meeting over the issue with police officers and the district health officials and gave necessary directions to them.

He told the officials that if there is any crowd gathering anywhere in the district then it will be held with covid norms, otherwise it will not happen. If there is a program anywhere in the district, it is necessary to seek prior permission from the Deputy Commissioner.

Garg said that the district Police should make at least 1000 challans per day and the Municipal Corporation officials must also make at least 100 challans in each of their zones. Check everywhere and challan at all places, especially in markets and malls and big hospitals, wherever there is a crowd.



He said that now according to the instructions of the state government, it is necessary to ensure the standard operating procedure ie SOP compliance in every programme.

Garg said that according to the new instructions, no more than 50% of the total capacity can be gathered in the indoor hall, the maximum limit of which is 200. Similarly, in open area i.e. open places, not more than 500 people can gather at one time and a maximum of 50 people can go to the cremation ground.

He also said that it would be the responsibility of the managers and

owners of event venues such as marriage palaces, clubs, farm houses, etc. that they would give information about the events to the nearest police station.

In the meeting, Dr Virender Yadav chief medical officer (CMO), Gurugram informed that the positivity rate in the district has come down to 7.8 percent. He told in the meeting that in the last 3 months the health department has done tests of 3 lakh people.

Apart from this, The rapid increase of coronavirus cases in Gurugram continued on Monday with 581 fresh cases coming to light.

The Covid-19 tally in Gurugram has now risen to 65,534 according to the official daily health bulletin.

One more patient infected with coronavirus died on Monday in the city. With this, a total of 368 persons have lost their lives in Gurugram.

The figures of COVID active patients are 3,168. A total of 61,998 have been cured and discharged including 384 on Monday.

## Man, 2 aides held for opening fire at 1st year DU student in Alipur

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 21-year-old man along with his two associates for opening fire at a first-year-college student in outer Delhi's Alipur area for allegedly chatting with his sister.

Police said that the victim, Karan Thapa, (18), sustained two gunshot injuries and was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment, where he is currently under observation.

According to Rajeev Ranjan Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outer North district, on Sunday night, when Thapa was standing at an open space near his house, three bike-borne men arrived there and opened fire at Thapa before escaping on their vehicle and the victim's father informed police.

"During preliminary investigation, it emerged that Thapa used to chat with a girl and knows her for over a year now but her brother, Vikrant, took

offence to this and he along with his associates, Vikas Pandey and Ashish, shot multiple times at the victim with a country made pistol and an automatic pistol and thereafter fled from the spot on a bike," said the DCP.

"A case of attempt to murder was registered and two empty and one live cartridges of 7.65 mm, a empty cartridge of 8 mm caliber and 2 misfired rounds were recovered from the scene of crime, said the DCP.

"After the names of the accused were disclosed, multiple raids were conducted at the possible hideouts and the accused, Vikas Pandey was arrested with one automatic pistol and two live cartridges in his possession from the area of Alipur," said the DCP.

"Later, Ashish and Vikrant were nabbed from near Valmiki Chowk and the weapon of offence along with the bike used during the offence was also taken into possession," said the DCP

## CISF conducts bomb scare drill near Media Centre

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To evaluate the response of security personnel to any bomb scare, a dummy exercise was conducted by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and other agencies on Monday after placing a toy-shaped object outside the National Media Centre in the national Capital.

According to Anil Pandey, the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) and spokesperson of the CISF, it was a dummy check conducted by our government building security (GBS) unit to check the response of our teams to such threats.

## 35 year-old man found dead in Mangolpuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 35 year-old man was found dead on Monday morning in northwest Delhi's Mangolpuri area. Police said that an investigation has been initiated into the matter.

The deceased has been identified as Chandarbhan, a resident of Mangolpuri. Police said that he used to work as a cardboard box painter in Rampura Industrial area.

"A CISF team was examining the area outside the National Media Centre around 10 am when they spotted a suspicious object. They observed a toy-shaped item wrapped in a polythene. Immediately, the local police was informed. The bomb detection squad (BDS) team of CISF checked the item thoroughly and presence of any explosive was ruled out," said a senior police official.

"The BDS of CISF and New Delhi district police thoroughly searched the area for any other suspicious article in the vicinity. Nothing else was found," said the senior police official.

## Gadkari to take stock of Delhi-Mumbai e-way work progress

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, will review the progress work of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project on April 8 in Nuh district of Haryana. The foundation stone for the project was laid on March 2019.

The 1,250 km long expressway, which will pass through Haryana (80km), Rajasthan (380), Madhya Pradesh (120km), Gujarat (300km) and Maharashtra (370km) once completed will cut travel time to 13 hours from 24 hours now between Delhi and Mumbai.

Recently, Gadkari and the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) in a statement had claimed that a section of the expressway will be operational in the second half of 2022.

It is expected that the proposed 12-lane and 1,250-km long Delhi-Mumbai Expressway will ease traffic congestion on Pune-Mumbai Expressway and other highways and bring down vehicular pollution in the national capital. Also, vehicles like buses and trucks can ply at 120 kmph speed.

The total estimated cost of the Delhi-Mumbai expressway project is about Rs 87,453

crore, including land acquisition cost of about Rs 20,589 crore.

The carriageway will run parallel to the Delhi-Alwar route in Haryana and will exit the state at Kolgaon. In Rajasthan, the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway will pass through Bharatpur, Malakhera, Rajgarh, Jaipur, Sawai Madhopur, Indragarh, Kota and Rawatbhata. In Madhya Pradesh, the highway will cross Bhanpura, Garoth, Neemuch, Mandasaur, Jaora, Ratlam and Thandla. In Maharashtra, the expressway will pass through Thane and Palghar to end at Mumbai.

The upcoming expressway, which will have India's first animal bridges or animal overpasses. These will be designed to keep the wildlife section unaffected from the new infrastructure. There will be around five such animal overpasses, passing through Ranthambore wildlife corridor and Mukundra wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan.

Also, the toll collection on the stretch will be through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. An initiative of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) for implementing electronic toll collection across the national highways in India..

## Delhi, IIT-D ink MoU for Centre for Sustainable Mobility

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) with IIT Delhi to create a 'Centre for Sustainable Mobility' and move towards world-class transport infrastructure.

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said on Monday that the Government has allocated ₹6.1 crore funds for the Centre for Sustainable Mobility. He said that contactless ticketing was introduced in Delhi for the first time in collaboration with IIT Delhi.

"All the transport advancements under this Centre will be integrated into a single app called One Delhi, which will be done by the Centre for Sustainable Mobility. The fund is being assigned from the Delhi Knowledge Development Foundation. The centre will be stationed in IIT Delhi, and will serve as a gateway to the solution of a number of urban transportation issues, and will be a step towards chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's dream of building a world-class public infrastructure. The centre has a dedicated space of 2000 square ft already demarcated to it," he said.

Commenting on the availability of public buses and the increase in their numbers, Gahlot added, "The bigger picture here is the adding of buses, which is a small yet very significant aspect of mobility. The Centre for Sustainable Mobility will solve existing issues in transportation, with a



futuristic approach, and aim towards enhancing public infrastructure.

Gahlot also said that the field of transportation globally has witnessed a paradigm shift. It is relying on data analytics, design and optimization and interdisciplinary research to increase efficiency of public transport and para-transit systems.

"The Centre for Sustainable Mobility will be stationed in IIT Delhi and will seek to integrate and analyse data and technology in order to expand the public infrastructure. An example of which is contactless ticketing. We introduced contactless ticketing in all buses for the first time in India in collaboration with IIT Delhi. This enabled the passengers to book tickets from the comfort of their mobile phones, and dependency on conductors

was done away with. Today, 70,000 tickets are being provided daily as a part of contactless service, which is beyond six per cent of the total tickets," he added.

Throwing light upon the open transit data, Gahlot added that the Centre for Sustainable Mobility will integrate and analyze data to expand public infrastructure.

"The open transit data system will be able to provide real-time location of cluster and DTC buses. The Centre will serve as a gateway to aid start ups with a number of themes, namely: to spin-off technology related to smart mobility- passenger information systems, multi modal journey planners, automation tools, ticketing framework etc. More than seven start-ups are already conducting their research along these lines. I earnestly invite start-ups to

come up and develop applications that base innovative ideas on this open-transit system," he said.

Commenting upon the EV policy, Gahlot added that the Centre for Sustainable Mobility will be responsible for creating an app that will have an open database of the location of these centres and other relevant information. More than 6000 incentives have been disbursed and 500 charging points are being set up. All of these technological advancements will be integrated into our One Delhi App, which will be done by the Centre for Sustainable Mobility. Right from passenger information system to other relevant information of E-Rickshaws, Metro, Grameen Sewas, and autos will be integrated in the One Delhi app."

"The Centre of Sustainable Mobility will produce path breaking solutions to Urban Transportation problems that are backed by strong empirical research and produce innovative and realistic solutions that can also be expanded to the rest of the country. With this, we have laid the foundations of expansion of transport infrastructure which will be phenomenal quality and the dream of giving Delhi a world-class transport system is coming nearer to us. We will, in the future, integrate this with all modes of transport in the city and create a true multi modal end-to-end solution," he added.

## Gunrunner held after exchange of fire at Shanti Van Chowk

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested a 38-year-old arms supplier and a member of interstate gang of robbers on Monday evening after a brief exchange of fire near Shanti Van Chowk in Central Delhi.

The accused has been identified as Raju, a resident of Bijnor district in Uttar Pradesh (UP). Police said that he was absconding in a case of Arms Act in Vasant Vihar after jumping bail granted to him due to Covid.

According to Pramod Singh Kushwah, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, police received information that Raju would come on a scooter at Geet Colony flyover from Shanti Van between 4 to 5 pm, following which a team was deployed at the stretch.

"Raju was spotted and asked to surrender. The accused left the scooter, whipped out a pistol and fired at police. Police also fired in which Raju got injured in his legs. He was rushed to LNJP hospital for the treatment," said the DCP.

"Five semi-automatic pistols and four live cartridges have

been recovered from the accused. Total seven rounds were fired -- four by accused and three by police. The scooter was found stolen from Ghaziabad in UP," said the DCP.

Raju was previously involved in more than two dozen criminal cases, including of murder, attempt to murder, armed robbery/dacoity, snatching and arms smuggling, in Delhi and UP, the DCP said.

Five criminal cases have been registered against Raju in Delhi -- two of robbery/dacoity, one of attempt to murder and two of arms act. He was absconding in a case of Arms Act in Vasant Vihar police station after jumping bail granted to him due to COVID, said the DCP.

"He had procured the pistols, recovered from him, from an arms manufacturer-cum-supplier Richhpal Singh of Burahanpur in MP. It has also been revealed that Raju, in conspiracy with a person of Bijnor, had planned to execute a contract killing of a person in Haridwar. It was found that a part of firearms recovered from accused were supposed to be supplied to two persons -- one in Delhi and other in Meerut," said the DCP adding that further investigation is underway.

# PM, CMs' meet on Covid, vaccination on Thursday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of a massive resurgence of Covid-19 cases, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has convened a meeting with Chief Ministers on Thursday to monitor the situation and the ongoing vaccination drive. The meeting follows Modi's meeting on Sunday with high-level officials to assess the situation.



In the high-level officials' meet, Modi had said the five-fold strategy of testing, tracing, treatment, COVID-appropriate behaviour and vaccination, if implemented with utmost seriousness and commitment, would be effective in curbing the spread of the pandemic.

According to the Health Ministry, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab have shown a steep rise in daily COVID cases, accounting for 81.90 per cent of the over 1 lakh infections reported in a day.

Maharashtra has reported the highest daily new cases at 57,074 which are 55.11 per cent of the new cases reported nationwide. It is followed by

# Cong seeks probe into Rafale deal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday sought a thorough probe into the Rafale defence deal and demanded answers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after a French media report claimed that ₹1.1 million was paid to a "middleman" by the aircraft manufacturer.

AICC chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said that a French news portal's report has proved that former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi's oft-repeated allegations of corruption in the deal were correct. Addressing a Press Conference Surjewala said as per the French portal's report, an investigation conducted by the 'French Anti-Corruption Agency (AFA)' has revealed that after signing of the deal in 2016, Rafale's manufacturer Dassault allegedly paid ₹1.1 million to a middleman — Defsys Solutions — which is an Indian company.

"Does it now not require a full and independent investigation into India's biggest defence deal to find out as to how much bribery and commission in reality, if any, was paid and to whom in the Indian government," he asked. "Will Prime Minister Narendra Modi answer to the nation now?" he asked.

Surjewala said this amount was shown as expenditure by Dassault as "gifts to clients". The Congress leader



said that the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) as also the stated Indian Government policy envisage there will be an "Integrity Clause" in every defence purchase contract which clearly states that there can be no middleman or payment of commission or bribe.

Surjewala said that as per the DPP, any evidence of middleman or commission or bribery has serious penal consequences including the banning of the supplier, cancellation of contract, registration of an FIR and imposition of heavy financial penalties on the company.

"Has it not vitiated the Rafale deal entailing imposition of heavy financial penalties on Dassault, banning of the company, registration of an FIR and other penal consequences," he asked. He asked whether the payment of ₹1.1 million shown by Dassault as 'Gifts to Clients' in reality a commission paid to the middleman for the Rafale deal.

"How can 'middleman' and 'Payment of Commission' be permitted in a government-to-government Defence Contract or in any Defence procurement in India in violation of the mandatory Defence Procurement Procedure," he asked.

# Allegation of graft utterly baseless sans proof: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday termed the allegations of corruption in the Rafale deal as "completely baseless" and asserted that the middleman whose name has cropped up in the French report on the deal was actually arrested in the AgustaWestland scam that happened during the Congress-led UPA regime.

It also cited that Supreme Court had rejected a demand for a probe in the purchase of the fighter aircraft and the CAG also found nothing wrong.

Responding to a question about the Congress' attack on the Modi Government over the bribe allegations, senior BJP leader and Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said at a press conference that the Opposition party made it a big issue in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls but lost badly.

He said the allegations of corruption were "completely baseless" and suggested that a report in the French media about the alleged financial irregularity in the deal may be due to "corporate rivalry" in that country.

Noting that the Congress had raised the issue earlier too, he said the Supreme Court



rejected the demand for a probe and the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) also found nothing wrong in the fighter aircraft deal.

"The Congress is raising the Rafale issue again. It lost in the Supreme Court. They campaigned in the 2019 polls on the Rafale issue, threw all kinds of abuses at the prime minister and still lost. How many seats did it get," Prasad said.

He noted that Sushen Gupta, the middleman whose name has cropped up in the French report on the Rafale deal, was arrested in the AgustaWestland case by the Enforcement Directorate in 2019.

In this probe, the names of many Congress leaders had surfaced, Prasad said and accused the Congress of trying

to "weaken" the security forces.

The Indian Air Force received a fleet of fighter aircraft in Rafale after 30 years, he said, adding that had it been there during the time of the Balakot operation to target terrorists in Pakistan then Indian aircraft would not have to cross the borders to carry out the strike.

To a question about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegation that the operation against Naxals in Chhattisgarh, in which 22 security personnel were killed, was "incompetently" executed and "poorly designed", Prasad shot back that India is increasingly refusing to take him seriously for the kind of "irresponsible" utterances he keeps making with "alarming regularity".

# Uddhav lost moral ground to rule: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday said that Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has forfeited the moral authority to govern after the Bombay High Court asked the CBI to probe the allegations of corruption against Anil Deshmukh.

Addressing a press conference here, senior BJP leader and Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad asked if Thackeray has no moral responsibility follow-

ing Deshmukh's resignation as the state home minister.

So many major incidents have happened under his government, Prasad said, referring to the Sachin Vaze case and former Mumbai Police commissioner Param Bir Singh's corruption allegations against Deshmukh.

"He has forfeited moral authority to govern. Democracy is run by the standards of probity and propriety," Prasad said, adding the "consistent conspic-

uous silence of Uddhav Thackeray is by itself raising a lot of questions".

Taking a dig at the chief minister, he said Deshmukh met NCP president Sharad Pawar and sought his permission before resignation while Thackeray has kept quiet.

Noting that the High Court has asked the CBI to do a preliminary enquiry, Prasad said all facets and linkages of the matter should be investigated and those involved brought to book.

The National Investigating Agency, which is probing the discovery of explosives outside industrialist Mukesh Ambani's home and the suspected murder of businessman Mansukh Hire, has unravelled many layers of the Sachin Vaze case, he noted.

The Union Minister wondered if Deshmukh was allegedly extorting money through Vaze for himself, his party NCP or the state government.

"Surely there may be many linkages. We expect all the linkages of this shameful conduct of corruption to be investigated properly. We believe all this chain points to a conspiracy of loot in which Vaze is a common factor. Who was giving patronage to whom, who was shielding whom? All aspects should be probed," he said.

Referring to Singh's allegation that Deshmukh had fixed a target of ₹100 crore through Vaze, the BJP leader asked, "If this was the target of one minister in Mumbai, then what was the target of other ministers for the entire State".

# Quad navies join French-led war games in Indian Ocean

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India along with the other three Quadrilateral countries including the US, Japan and Australia joined a France-led mega naval exercise on Monday in the eastern Indian Ocean region. The three-day exercise is a reflection of their growing strategic cooperation in the region.

Giving details here on Monday, officials said the Indian warships Satpura and Kiltan along with P-8I long range maritime patrol aircraft are participating in multilateral exercise 'La Perouse'.

The Indian Navy ships and aircraft will exercise at sea with ships and aircraft of navies of France, Australia, Japan and the US during the exercise, they said.

Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said the exercise will witness complex and advanced naval operations including surface



warfare, anti-air warfare and air defence exercises. He said it will also feature weapon firing exercises, cross deck flying operations and tactical manoeuvres among others.

"The exercise will showcase high levels of synergy, coordination and interoperability between the friendly navies," he said.

"Participation by the Indian Navy in the exercise demonstrates the shared values with friendly navies ensuring freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order," Madhwal said.

Besides host France, the four other participants are members of the Quad or Quadrilateral coalition. India

# PM's 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' to be held tomorrow



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the CBSE and other Board examinations due next month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to interact with students in his annual event "Pariksha Pe Charcha" to be held by the Education Ministry on Wednesday through a new virtual format. Modi took to the social media platform to announce that his annual interaction with students "Pariksha Pe Charcha" will be held on April 7.

"A new format, several interesting questions on a wide range of subjects and a memorable discussion with our brave #ExamWarriors, parents and teachers. Watch 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' at 7 PM on 7th April," the prime minister tweeted. Along with his tweet, the PM also tagged a video on the event in which highlights of this year's 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' are elaborated upon.

"We have been living under the shadow of coronavirus for the last one year and because of that I have to forego the charm of meeting you in person and have to be with you in a new format -- the first virtual edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha'," Modi said in the video.

He also urged students to look upon exams as an opportunity and not as an end of life's dreams. A voice-over in the video says that the prime minister will speak with children as a friend and also interact with teachers and parents during the virtual event. In the said video, Modi talked about the pressure of what people and parents will say which sometimes becomes a burden and also conveyed that this is 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' but is not confined to just a discussion on 'Pariksha' or exams. It was earlier announced that Prime Minister Modi's annual interaction with students will be held online this year in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Soon after the PM announced his schedule, Ministry of Education shared that the fourth edition of Pariksha Pe Charcha, the unique interactive programme of Prime Minister, with students, teachers and parents is being held for the first time in virtual mode while adhering to the COVID-19 protocols. Almost 14 lakh participants registered themselves in the contest for the 4th edition of PPC while 10.5 lakh students, 2.6 lakh teachers and 92 thousand parents participated in the creative writing contest.

## WINDOW ADVERTISEMENT WALK-IN-INTERVIEW IN CRPF

Suitable and willing Male & Female candidates may attend WALK-IN-INTERVIEW for engagement as Specialist Medical Officers for Composite Hospital, CRPF, Jharoda Kalan, N/Delhi on Contractual Basis as per details/dates given below.

Sl. No	Date and time of Interview	Venue/ Interview Centre	Interview to be held for CHs	No. of Vacancies of Spl. of MOs.	No. of Vacancies of GDMO	Age	Remuneration	Qualification
01	07/04/21 at 0900 hrs	Composite Hospital, CRPF, Delhi	CH Delhi			Below 70 years as on date of Walk-in-interview	Rs. 85,000/- for Specialists MOs	Post Graduate Degree/ Diploma in concerned specialty. One and Half years experience after obtaining PG Degree. Two and half years experience after obtaining PG Diploma.
			Anaesthesia	01	-			
			Medicine	01	-			
			Psychiatry	01	-			
			Radiology	01	-			
			Orthopaedics	01	-			
			Total	05	-			

- Appointment is purely on contract basis and the initial period of appointment of contract will be for three years which may be extended for further 02 years on year to year basis subject to the Maximum age of 70 years.
  - On completion of tenure, the contract shall lapse automatically. However, the appointment can be terminated at any time (on either side) by giving one month's notice or by paying one month's notice or by paying one month's salary without assigning any reason or failure to complete three months service to the satisfaction of the competent authority.
  - The appointee shall not be entitled to any benefits like provident fund, pension, gratuity, medical attendance treatment, seniority, promotion etc or any other benefits available to the Government servant appointed on regular basis. The appointee will not be granted any claim or right to regular appointment to any post under CRPF.
  - The working hours of the appointee as per the schedule of CRPF Hospitals/Establishment or as fixed by competent authority.
  - The appointment carried the liability to serve in any part of the country.
  - The appointee shall perform the duties assigned to him/her. The Competent authority reserves the right to assign any duty as and when required. No extra/additional allowance will be admissible in case of such assignment.
  - The leave entitlement of the appointee shall be governed as per DOP & T.O.M. No. 12016/3/84-Estt(L) dated 12 April 1985, O.M. No. 12016/1/90-Estt(L) dated 05th July 1990 and O.M. No. 12016/2/99-Estt(L) dated 12th July 1999 as amended from time to time.
  - No TA/DA and boarding / lodging will be provided during walk-in-interview.
  - No TA/DA will be paid during the period of engagement in CRPF on contractual basis/hiring basis.
  - During the continuance of contract period he/she will be subject to follow the standard of discipline of the force and will execute the orders of administrative authority either written or verbal.
  - Interested candidates may also refer to our website [www.crpf.gov.in](http://www.crpf.gov.in) for terms and conditions/full details as applicable for contractual appointment of GDMOs and Specialist MOs.
2. While appearing for Walk-in-interview, the candidates should bring documents in original & photocopies of all relevant documents (Degree, Age Proof & Experience Certificate etc.) application in plain paper superscripting the name of post applied for & five passport size recent photographs. Interview will be followed by Medical Examination.

Davp 19140/11/0007/2122

# ED seizes ₹165.86-cr assets of coal mining accused

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached immovable assets to the tune of ₹165.86 crore owned by Anup Majee in illegal Coal Mining/pilferage case of West Bengal.

The attached assets include land, factory premises, plant and machinery and other assets of two companies Ispat Damodar Private Limited and Sonic Thermal Private Limited. Majee is the prime accused in the multi-crore coal pilferage scam.

"The manufacturing plants of both these companies are situated in Purulia and Bankura, West Bengal and beneficially owned by Anup Majee," the agency said in a statement.

The ED had initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered by CBI, Kolkata. Money laundering investigation revealed that Majee had transferred "Proceeds of Crime" (POC) to the tune of Rs 67.80 crore to both the said companies in guise of share purchase of these companies for acquiring the plants/assets of these companies, it said.

Additionally, POC to the tune of ₹98.06 crore were also transferred to both of the said companies. The total proceeds of crime to the tune of ₹165.86 crore transferred to these companies by Majee had been layered through the maze of shell companies and generated from the illegal coal mining.

# EC suspends five officials deputed for poll work in Assam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission has suspended five officials deputed at a polling booth in Assam's Hasao district in Haflong constituency where 181 votes were cast in a booth, even though only 90 people were registered as voters. The booth is in the Haflong constituency, which went to the polls in the second phase on April 1. Haflong witnessed 74 per cent polling.

As the incident came to light, the District Election Officer suspended five poll officials of the booth, set up at 107(A) Khotlir LP School, and proposed a repoll. However, the official order for re-election at the booth, an auxiliary polling station of the main voting centre at Mouldam LP School, is yet to be issued.

The suspension order by the Deputy Commissioner-District Election Officer of Dima Hasao was issued on April 2, the next day of polling, but it came to light on Monday morning.

Stating "dereliction of duty", for allowing 181 electors to cast vote against 90 electors as per valid electoral roll at polling station number 107-A Khotlir LP School in Haflong constituency the CEO Assam has suspended Seikhoiem

# THE VOTERS' LIST OF THE POLLING STATION HAD 90 NAMES, BUT 171 VOTES WERE CAST IN THE ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINE (EVM), OFFICIALS SAID

Lhangum (Sector Officer), Prahlad Ch Roy (Presiding Officer), Parameswar Charangsa (1st Polling Officer), Swaraj Kanti Das (2nd Polling Officer) and Lalamlo Thiek (3rd Polling Officer) with immediate effect.

The voters' list of the polling station had 90 names, but 171 votes were cast in the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), officials said. "The head of that interior village refused to accept the voters' list and brought a list of his own. Then, the people of the village voted according to that list," an official said. It was not immediately known why the polling officials accepted the village head's demand and whether there was any security personnel present at the polling station or the role they played.

# No foreign training for babus till further order: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has decided that foreign training of bureaucrats will continue to be suspended "until further orders". The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) Ministry had in June last year said that there won't be any foreign training during 2020-21 due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

The DoPT, cadre controlling authorities (ministries concerned) and central training institutes conduct foreign training or have international components as part of the overall training programme for civil servants.

Mentioning its June 2020 order, the ministry said it was informed that due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and keeping in view the consequent safety measures etc., no foreign training shall be conducted during the financial year 2020-21. "In this regard, all Cadre Controlling Authorities (CCAs) and Central Training Institutes (CTIs) are informed that no foreign training shall be conducted until further orders," the ministry said in its order dated April 1.

However, under exceptional circumstances, if it is felt necessary to conduct any foreign training, prior approval of the DoPT may be obtained, it said. Over ₹257 crore had been allocated to the Personnel Ministry for 2021-22 for domestic and foreign training of bureaucrats and augmenting necessary infrastructure, according to the Budget.

# 62,000 Central forces for Bengal 3rd phase polls

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With the third phase of Bengal Assembly elections barely a few hours away, the Election Commission made a massive security bandobast in an apparent anticipation of violence in interior areas of South 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly district. With the campaign, so far, having been exceptionally vitriolic --- where the rival leaders hurled personal invectives on each other --- the Tuesday's election for 31 seats across three districts are likely to be "highly action-packed," ECI officials say.

No wonder in the third round of the "Khela" (game) --- a popular electoral slogan coined by the TMC in which many Opposition leaders see a hidden intimidation --- the ECI has arranged for about 62,000 Central forces in addition to the

State police.

Out of these 144 companies central forces will be deployed in Howrah where elections will be held for 7 seats, 307 companies will be deployed for 16 seats in South 24 Parganas including the volatile Diamond Harbour and Basanti seats which together will get 197 companies of central forces. Barupur division would get 130 seats. In Hooghly the high-tension areas of Pursura, Arambagh, Goghat and Khanakul will get 11, 24, 21 and 34 companies of central forces sources said.

Out of 205 candidates in the fray for the third round of polling 13 candidates are women. Among the notables contestants in this round are BJP's Padma Bhushan awardee candidate Swapan Dasgupta a senior journalist. He is contesting from the Tarakeswar con-

stituency in Hooghly against TMC's Ramendu Singha Roy and CPI(M)'s Surajit Ghosh.

## Coal scam: TMC threatens BJP of defamation suit

**Kolkata:** The Trinamool Congress have threatened BJP leaders like Suwendu Adhikari with criminal defamation case after audio tapes allegedly implicating an arrested police officer and a second person who in the tape reportedly referred to the name of a top TMC leader and MP from South Kolkata.

"The BJP leaders have referred to the names of our top leaders without any proof or substance... our party is contemplating criminal defamation against these leaders," Bengal minister Bratya Basu said.

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ CHANDITALA/KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday responded sharply to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Didi-o-Didi jibes saying "his strategy to lampoon will boomerang on him" and "the BJP will end up into becoming a tadpole," after the elections.

Hitting out at the Prime Minister from a rally at Chinsurah the Chief Minister said, "I am fighting single alone with a broken leg... still I will win the elections with one leg today and then I will win Delhi with two legs... so it is time for the BJP to watch out."

The Trinamool Congress has been objecting to Prime Minister's repeated mentioning of the Chief Minister as "Didi o Didi" in various rallies provoking wide laughter. "I have not heard a person sitting on that high a constitutional post to ridicule another person also sitting on a constitutional post in such a demeaning man-

ner... it is anything but politics," TMC MP Mahua Moitra earlier said referring to the Prime Minister.

Iterating once again that Bengal will not be ruled by Gujarat, Banerjee said being a Royal Bengal tigress "I promise to you that I will not allow any one from Gujarat to dictate terms in Bengal... Bengal will be ruled by the Bengalis and none else."

Apparently attacking Home Minister Amit Shah for "failing to ensure security of the central forces," --- who are manning the elections of Bengal --- Banerjee said "they (central ministers) are sitting in Bengal instead of governing the country for which they have been elected whereas our central forces are being massacred in Chhattisgarh."

Attacking Indian Secular Front leader and Muslim cleric Abbas Siddique who has joined hands with the Left and the Congress to raise a third front in Bengal, Banerjee said "there are some new entrants who are taking huge money

from the BJP to divide the minority votes --- just like a party from Hyderabad (AIMIM) did in Bihar ensuring the defeat of secular forces there by dividing the Muslim votes... But I am sure the minority people of Bengal will not fall into the trap of these upstart leaders and they will not allow their vote to be divided."

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of holding elections in eight phases saying she would have held it in three or four phases. In an obvious reference to the Election Commission Banerjee said "was it prudent to hold the elections in eight phases during the pandemic situation... Is it not putting the voters and election workers at risk?... I would have preferred holding the elections 3-4 phases."

Reminding that no amount of splurging of money could bring the BJP to power as "the people of Bengal are politically conscious," Banerjee said "After May 2 it is once again going to

be the same story of Unnayan (development) being carried out by a TMC Government."

## Mamataji --- single woman fighting against everyone else: Jaya Bachchan

**Kolkata:** Actor-turned-Samajwadi Party leader Jaya Bachchan who commenced her campaign in favour of the Trinamool Congress on Monday hailed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for showing the guts to fight alone against the entire political fraternity of the country.

Warning the opponents not to hijack the religion and democratic rights of others (read the Chief Minister) the veteran cine star said, "I have the utmost love and respect for Mamataji - a single woman fighting against all atrocities... a single woman fighting against everyone else. She has a broken leg... but her heart is not broken, but nothing is going to stop her."

Daughter of a Bengali

writer Ms Bachchan, is a Bengali by birth, and a former Rajya Sabha MP from Uttar Pradesh.

In an apparent reference to the alleged attempt of the BJP leadership to polarize the elections by painting Banerjee as a Muslim appeaser she said "I want to say... do not hijack my religion from me and do not hijack my democratic rights from me. And when I say me... I mean the people. I represent all the people." Banerjee was fighting to preserve the democratic right of every Bengali person she said.

Notably BJP leaders like Suwendu Adhikari have of late been addressing the Chief Minister as "Begum" who donned "Hijab" to appease the Muslims and Pakistanis.

# BJP scores 2nd goal against MVA as Deshmukh resigns

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Nearly one and a half years after it lost power and became the principal Opposition party, the BJP scored second major goal against the Shiv Sena-led MVA Government on Monday, as Anil Deshmukh resigned as the State Home Minister over the allegations of corruption, close on the heels of the resignation of Shiv Sena's Sanjay Rathod over the suspicious death of a Tik Tok star.

Just 37 days after Sena's Forest Minister Sanjay Rathod over his alleged links to the suicide by 22-year-old Pooja Chavan, Deshmukh of the NCP resigned as the State Home Minister over the allegations of corruption made against him by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh.

With the back-to-back resignations by two MVA Ministers, the Opposition BJP has scored a political point over the three party ruling alliance in the state.

It may be recalled on the eve of the budget session of the State Legislature, Rathod had on February 28 resigned as the State Forest Minister over Poojka Chavan's suspicious death.

On February 8, Pooja had allegedly committed suicide by jumping off the Heaven Park building in Pune's Wanwadi locality on the intervening night of

February 7 and 8.

Following her death, the Opposition BJP on Saturday had upped the ante over the alleged of a 22-year-old Tik-Tok star Pooja Chavan, by rooting for the arrest of Rathod, who was reportedly in love with the deceased woman.

BJP leaders Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil, Kirit Somaiya and party's woman leader Chitra Wagh had said that the minister had no moral right to continue in the office. "In fact, he should be booked abetting Pooja's alleged suicide and arrested immediately," Wagh said.

Former chief minister and senior BJP Devenra Fadnavis had demanded that Pooja's death be investigated in view of the fact that the telephonic conversations between her and the minister had gone viral on society media.

Similarly in the case of State Home Minister, the BJP made an issue over the allegations of corruption made by the former Police Commissioner against Deshmukh and a report submitted by former State Intelligence Commissioner Rashmi Shukla on the alleged scam involving the transfer and postings of officers.

Fadnavis had on March 23 demanded a CBI inquiry into the alleged racket involving the transfers and promotions of police officers ranging from inspectors

to high-ranging IPS officers. However, the MVA government dismissed the report submitted by Rashmi Shukla saying that she had exceeded her brief in conducting the probe.

Simultaneously, in a move that was seen as the one orchestrated by the BJP, Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh moved the Supreme Court on Monday, demanding a CBI probe against Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh over corruption charges.

On March 25, after the Supreme Court refused to entertain his similar plea, Param Bir Singh on Thursday moved the Bombay High Court, seeking a CBI investigation into the alleged corruption charges against the Maharashtra Home Minister.

On its part, the BJP on Monday appeared to be taking credit for the resignation of Deshmukh as the State Home Minister over the charges of corruption made by the former police commissioner.

## Pawar confidant Dilip Walse-Patil front runner for Maha HM's post

**Mumbai:** Senior NCP leader and Sharad Pawar's close confidant Dilip Walse-Patil on Monday emerged as the front-runner for the post of Maharashtra Home Minister in the wake of Anil Deshmukh's resignation from the post.

Walse-Patil is currently the Exciser and labour Minister in the Uddhav Thackeray government.

Walse-Patil, who was first elected to the Maharashtra Assembly from Ambeagaon, has been a staunch supporter of Sharad Pawar ever since the time the latter was in the Congress.

He moved out of the Congress along with Pawar and joined the NCP when the latter walked out of the parent party and set up his own party in 1999. He had even worked as personal secretary of Pawar.

In the erstwhile Democratic Front government, Walse-Patil was a minister and had looked after portfolios like energy, higher and technical education.

Walse-Patil also served as the speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly.

He is currently serving as the President of National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories Limited (NFCFSF).PNS

# ADMK, DMK claim victories as campaign ends in TN

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Two claims stand out as the high decibel campaign for Tuesday's election to Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly came to a close on Sunday evening. A fortnight ago, M K Stalin, the DMK president, declared at Salem (the home district of Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy) that his party led alliance would win in all 234 seats in the Assembly election and a Government would be formed with no Opposition party in the Assembly.

He repeated this twice and said that the DMK-led alliance would win in all 234 constituencies. Stalin declared that his claim was based on the public response during the campaign. The DMK chief was on an outreach programme and has covered all the assembly constituencies in the State.

Palaniswamy on his part, claimed on Sunday that his party-led alliance would bag 200 seats and continue to rule the State for five more years. He said that his claim was based on public response to his campaign rallies.

Pre-poll surveys held by media houses showed that the DMK was far ahead of the AIADMK alliance and would literally sweep the election. R Vasudevan, a business baron in Vellore is of the view that there is a strong anti-incumbency factor against the AIADMK government.

"The party's disintegration started after the demise of Jayalalitha. Ministers and leaders are involved in competitive corruption because they were not sure how long they would remain in office," Vasudevan told The Pioneer.

An apolitical person, Vasudevan

feels that the Edappadi Palaniswami government could complete the tenure only with the tacit support of the BJP. "The Centre helped them to overcome the corruption charges," he said.

Down south, people in Kanyakumari district too are fed up of the AIADMK-BJP alliance. "The BJP's attitude towards our demands to set up an airport in Kanyakumari was not all helpful. Former minister Pon Radhakrishnan lost to Vasanth Kumar of the Congress in the 2019 Lok Sabha election only because of the indifference of the BJP towards our issues," said Dr Y R Johnson, former director, Navodaya Vidyalaya who heads Kumari Maha Sabha, a Christian organisation in Kanyakumari. Dr Johnson said he saw no reason why he or people like him should vote for the BJP or the AIADMK.

# Rlys achieves milestone, builds arch over world's highest railway bridge

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Coming one more step closer to the Kashmir valley, the spirited team of engineers of the Northern Railways on Monday touched a historic milestone with the completion of the steel arch over Chenab bridge, the world's highest railway bridge, part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project (USBRL).

Work on the main arch was launched in the first week of November 2017. This was one of the most difficult part of the bridge over mighty Chenab.

This achievement is a major leap towards the completion of the 111 km long winding stretch from Katra to Banihal.

It is arguably the biggest civil-engineering challenge faced by any railway project in India in recent history.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Public Relations Officer, "The 5.6-metre last piece of metal was fitted at the highest point and joined the two arms of the arch that currently stretch towards each other from both the banks of the river."



"This completed the shape of the arch that will then loom over the treacherous Chenab, flowing some 359 metres below. After completion of the arch work, removal of the stay cables, filling of the concrete in the arch rib, erection of the steel trestle, launching of the viaduct and track laying work will be taken up," the statement read.

The completion of the historic Arch work was also seen by Piyush Goyal Minister for Railways and Commerce & Industry and Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Suneet Sharma, CEO cum Chairman, Railway Board, Ashutosh Gangal, General Manager Northern Railway through video conferencing.

## SALIENT FEATURES OF THE ARCH OF THE ICONIC CHENAB BRIDGE

- Indian Railways is constructing the iconic Arch Bridge on River Chenab as a part of the USBRL project to connect the Kashmir valley to the rest of the nation.
- This bridge is 1315m long.
- This is the highest Railway Bridge in the world being 359m above the river bed level.
- It will be 35 meters higher than the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris (France).
- Construction of Bridge involved fabrication of 28,660 MT steel, 10 Lakh Cum Earthwork, 66,000 Cum Concrete and 26 Km motorable roads.
- Arch consists of steel boxes. Concrete will be filled in boxes of the Arch to improve stability.
- Overall weight of Arch is 10,619 MT.
- Erection of the members of arch by overhead cable cranes done for first time on Indian Railways.
- The most sophisticated 'Tekla' software used for structural detailing.

# March 2021 third warmest in 121 years

**New Delhi:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday that March 2021, was the third warmest in 121 years in terms of monthly average temperature. Several parts of the country had recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius in March.

On March 29, Delhi reeled under a "severe heatwave" on the day of Holi, as the maximum temperature shot up to 40.1 degrees Celsius, making it the hottest day in March in 76 years.

The IMD, in its review for the month, said the observed monthly average maximum, minimum and mean temperature for the country as a whole during March this year are 32.65 degrees Celsius, 19.95 degrees Celsius and 26.30 degrees Celsius, respectively, against the normal 31.24 degrees Celsius, 18.87 degrees Celsius and 25.06 degrees Celsius based on the climatology period 1981-2010.

"The all India average monthly maximum temperature during March 2021 with 32.65 degrees Celsius is the warmest in the last 11 years, and third warmest in the last 121 years with 2010 and 2004 as the ever warmest and second warmest month with 33.09 degrees Celsius and 32.82 degrees Celsius, respectively," the IMD said.

As per the forecast, the hilly areas of north India and the plains are likely to receive widespread rainfall from April 5-9. PNS

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**CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED**  
Corporate Office: 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No.2, N.S.C. Bose Road, Chennai-600 001.  
Branch Office: Plot No.6, 2nd Floor, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005.

**POSSESSION NOTICE Under Rule 8 (1)**

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rules 9 of the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules, 2002 issued demand notices calling upon the borrowers, whose names have been indicated in Column [B] below on dates specified in Column [C] to repay the outstanding amount indicated in Column [D] below with interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties mortgaged with the Company described in Column [E] herein below on the respective dates mentioned in Column [F] in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under.

The borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned in Column [E] below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited for an amount mentioned in Column [D] along with interest and other charges.

Under section 13 (8) of the Securitisation Act, the borrowers can redeem the secured asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of sale.

Sl No.	NAME AND ADDRESS OF BORROWER & LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	DATE OF DEMAND NOTICE	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT	DETAILS OF PROPERTY POSSESSED	DATE OF PHYSICAL POSSESSION
A	Loan No. X0HEELD00001715572 1. VIJAY PRAKASH SHARMA 2. DINESH SHARMA 3. EKTA SHARMA 4. SHREYA IMPEX 5. BABLI SHARMA All are residing at WZ-501, Shri Nagar, Shakurpur, Gali No.1, Delhi - 110 034.	22.07.2019	Rs. 2,37,91,927.42 as on 16.07.2019	All the part of parcel of mortgaged property bearing No.WZ-501/289 Admeasuring 150 Sq.yds. Part of Mustil No.29, Killa No.20/2, Mustil No.29, Killa No.16, 15/2 Abadi Known as Gali No.1 Sri Nagar situated in the area of Village Shakurpur Delhi.	03.04.2021

Date: 03.04.2021  
Place: New Delhi

AUTHORISED OFFICER  
M/s. Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING AUCTION PROCESS**

Sr	Date of Auction	26-04-2021
1	Date of Auction	26-04-2021
2	Place of Submission of Bids and Place of Auction	1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005
3	Date of Inspection of Property	20-04-2021 and 22-04-2021 (In business Hours)
4	Last date for Submission of Bids	23-04-2021 before 5.00 pm

A bidder may, on his own choice, avail the facility in the auction by making application in prescribed format which is available along with the offer/tender document on the given office address mentioned hereunder. Sale is strictly subject to terms and conditions incorporated in this advertisement and the

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AUCTION**

- The property is sold on 'As is where is basis' 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis'.
- The Bidder is obliged to exercise full due diligence in all respects, including to inspect each of the details of the property mentioned above on the scheduled date & time.
- Submission of bids to M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited would be construed a deemed acceptance by the bidder that (i) he/she/it has exercised due diligence in all respects; (ii) is satisfied with all details/measurements of property; (iii) Acknowledges full knowledge of terms and conditions that govern the auction and (iv) Waives all his/her/its rights to make any contrary claims against company at any future date.
- The sale is subject to confirmation by the Authorised officer if the borrower/guarantor pays the entire outstanding amount in full before sale, no sale will be conducted.
- The Bidder shall remit Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by Banker's Cheque / DD drawn in favour of M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited for the respective Loan A/c, along with the bid form in a Sealed Cover addressed to The Authorised Officer, M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited up to 5.00 P.M on 23-04-2021. Please note that, in reference to successful bidder(s), EMD is adjustable against the sale consideration receivable by M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. Also, EMD is refundable to the unsuccessful bidder(s).
- The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on the sale being knocked down in his/her/its favour and the balance within 15 days by Banker's Cheque / DD drawn in favour of M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited for the respective Loan A/c Number.
- In case the successful bidder fails to deposit 25% of the bid amount immediately on sale being knocked down in his/her/its favour and/or the balance amount, within 15 days the deposit made by the bidder shall be forfeited without any prior intimation.
- The charges / fees payable for conveyance such as stamp duty, registration fee, maintenance charges electricity charges etc., shall be borne by the successful bidder. The Authorised Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, property tax or any other dues to the Government or local body or any other authority in respect of the property under sale.
- The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject the bid or adjourn / postpone/cancel the sale/modify any terms and conditions of the sale without any prior notice or assigning any reason therefor.
- The Sale will only be in favour of successful bidder and not his/her nominee.
- This Notice is also to the Borrower(s) Guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general. The borrower has absolute right for the redemption of property till the

M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited are not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the property as mentioned above. The Property shall be auctioned on 'As Is Where Is Basis', 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis'.

For further details, contact the Authorised Officer, at the above mentioned Office address.

Place: Delhi  
Date: 05.04.2021

Sd/- Authorised Officer  
M/s Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Battle ready

Security personnel need better gear, technology to take on the outlaws without suffering losses

There seems to be something grossly wrong with the counter-insurgency operations unleashed by the security forces against Maoists in the Red Corridor. Had it not been so, 22 jawans would not have died in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar in an ambush laid by those who they are out to hunt. Apparently, the Naxalites had prior information about the police party's movement and were tracking them on a real-time basis. They trapped the personnel and killed them; those who could escape were just fortunate. It was a combined operation, with the personnel drawn from the Special Task Force (STF), District Reserve Guard (DRG), Chhattisgarh Police, CRPF and its elite CoBRA unit. But what went wrong? Usually, it is the State police's duty to provide Intelligence inputs;

the information is then shared with the paramilitary and subsequently an operation is planned. The lower-ranking officer or constable's input plays a vital role in designing the intricacies of the operation, only after which the party moves for combat. Ironically, there is no guarantee of such inputs being foolproof, as also that the policeman or his informers might be acting as "double agents". This can, and sometimes does, prove lethal to the security personnel. The operation's success depends upon zeroing down on the exact location from all sides, allowing no room for the Naxals to escape. It often involves a contingency plan to switch over to at the eleventh hour when the

party is out for an operation and in case the Maoists have advance information.

What exactly went wrong in the Bastar case is a matter of investigation. If it was an Intelligence or planning failure, then not only the lower-rung officers but also those involved in planning the operation should be held accountable. Police parties out to hunt down Naxals are often also targeted on their way back after an operation. Apparently, there are inconsistencies in the way the police parties communicate among themselves. Often, the Naxals manage to hear the messages on radio sets used by the security forces by accidentally setting the same frequency. They decode the message and gather all information about the planning against them. Also, the forces operate on different frequencies (as allocated) and there is a pressing need to have a common channel that is impenetrable. Though drones are used in combing operations but our forces need advanced tools and technology that cannot be accessed by Maoists or terrorists. There is also a need to strengthen the Intelligence network with the involvement of paramilitary personnel to ensure that they do not have to depend solely on police information. It's not enough to announce compensation for the family of martyrs or those who are injured. It's also not sufficient to go all-out in a hurry against Naxalites after any such incident. In retaliatory operations, often the innocent villagers or tribal are caught in the crossfire. Our security personnel work in very harsh conditions and in difficult terrains. They deserve much better in terms of logistics, tactics and Intelligence-gathering, apart from the basic amenities.

### PICTALK



A wildfire in the Tankore forest area of Uttarakashi district, in Uttarakhand

PTI

## Same ol' RaGa?

Rahul questioning the Govt on Bastar is good. But he'd better be careful about what he says in general

The Congress' former president and the Gandhi family's scion, Rahul, is suddenly making his presence felt in the nation's political firmament. The reason may be any, whether the ongoing Assembly polls or the ensuing Congress' organisational election slated for after this round of balloting in the States concerned, but it is indeed hearty news for democracy that one of the top leaders of the main Opposition party in Parliament has re-discovered his voice. Of course, Rahul has been known to speak on certain subjects on certain occasions but it's largely been a matter of his choice and fancy and such utterances have been intermittent, all of which tends to take the gravitas away from his pressing concerns. Also, it appears a tad unprofessional when he comes across as underprepared to speak on a subject to an interviewer — however, when he simply tweets or makes a speech, basically a monologue, then he does quite alright. But put him in front of an interviewer, and the chances of his saying something controversial or goofy burgeoon manifold. Several such instances jump to mind.

A case in point is his recent video interview to former US Under-Secretary of State and Harvard University professor Nicholas Burns. Talking to Burns, he openly exhorted the US to intervene in India's domestic affairs by wondering out loud why it wasn't pulling up his "rivals" for "wholesale capture of institutions". The seasoned Burns smartly side-stepped it with a straight face, showing his adeptness at diplomacy. In the past, Rahul's interviews to Indian media were airbrushed by his handlers before being released, but that could not be done to the Harvard interaction. After being in the public eye for long, and with such recurring instances to his credit, his handlers within the Congress should realise that interviews are just not his forte, at least not for the time being, as he comes across as unfocused, fidgety and out of depth. However, all this is no reason to lose hope because sincerity, hard work and dedication are one's best friends to be able to shake hands with success. No comparisons, but it would help him to remember that in the not-too-distant past, Narendra Modi, who is arguably the best political orator and crowd-puller in India today, was not too comfortable (though he might have been confident) fielding questions from the media before he entered Parliament for the first time.

# Forget blue/white, think of 'No collar'

The novel concept of 'intrapreneurship', though it sounds exciting, is fraught with risks in a country like ours



PRAFULL GORADIA

Lately, a novel concept of 'intrapreneurship' has come into currency, whereby a corporation enables and encourages its executive to develop entrepreneurial aptitude. Hopefully, as a result, the company doing so would become aggressively commercial with more profits and greater growth. This is an imaginative concept, but in our country, especially for small to medium corporates, such a proposal could be fraught with risks.

Such an apprehension is not without reason. The first thought to cross the mind of an ambitious executive would be how he could acquire the business of his employer(s) by displacing the current leading shareholders. If he finds acquisition by this route beyond his reach for the time being, he might get busy trying to get hold of the business secrets of the company in order to set up a parallel of his own. All this while or more, the executive's time and energy would be lost to his employer. If he eventually feels frustrated, he would possibly think of how he could dip his hands in the till.

It is interesting that in the history of British association with India, which clocked over 300 years till 1947, there were innumerable incidents of its white officials, of both the East India Company and later the Crown, privately accepting presents, big or small, from suppliers as well as clients. The saga can be said to have begun with the man from Shropshire (England), Robert Clive, a writer (the term used then in India for an office clerk) for the East India Company, who is the first dazzling example of this practice. Clive went on to lay the footing for the military and political supremacy of the Company by ending the reign of Siraj-ud-Dowla, the *nawab* of Bengal, and the *nawabi* itself and laid his hands on its treasury; in today's terms, the sum that came into Clive's hands would be an estimated £2.325 billion. Clive's rewards included another £30,000 (approximately £11 million in 2020) in return for sup-



porting Mir Jafar — the turncoat who had crossed over in the Battle of Plassey — on the throne. This was in the form of grant of a  *jagir*.

Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of the Company's interests in India, had many Indian friends who plied him with presents. Both these distinguished gentlemen ended up being tried by the British Parliament. Yet, at no stage did it cross either's mind to become either the *nawab* of Bengal or the *sultan* of Bengal, Bombay and Madras. One ought to recall that in those pre-steamship times, ships with sails would ordinarily take about three months to reach India from England. The alternative was to write helpless letters to dismiss the usurper. That was British loyalty to Company and Crown.

In all the years the British traded in India, presents, whether legitimate or exaggerated, were taken by their officials. But never was an owner replaced by his executive. In contrast, my businesses, based in Kolkata, Vadodara and Mumbai, were nearly usurped by the very men who were the founder chief executives with



THE ENTIRE COUNTRY NEEDS TO BE EXPOSED TO THE NATIONAL PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT. THE DAYS OF WHITE COLLAR AND BLUE COLLAR JOBS ARE GOING OUT, WHILE FUNCTIONS THAT DO NOT HAVE THE STATUS OF ANY COLLAR ARE GAINING TRACTION

my full trust and backing. In the context of employment, the subject raised is important. On a world-wide basis, only half the people employed have jobs. The other half are self-employed. This includes professionals like doctors, lawyers, chartered accountants and, at the other end, hawkers, shopkeepers, porters, and so on. The proliferation of economic activity in the liberalisation era has spawned a whole new world of service providers ranging from healthcare, tourism, education, software services and even weddings, which have become full-fledged businesses by themselves.

What is therefore of more relevance in such a changing milieu is the establishment of schools that can expose young men and women to the knowhow of starting small businesses, and the dos and don'ts of the same. Yes, there are innumerable institutes of management in the country — another business that has seen huge proliferation — but they normally do not produce future entrepreneurs. Instead, they send out future business managers. The institutions that can produce

future businesspeople still seem to be missing. At the elementary level, as far as known, there are no schools that guide a young person on how to set up a shop, small or big.

Self-employment is today crucial, more than ever before. More and more women are seeking jobs; more youth are migrating to towns and cities from villages. This is because landholdings have shrunk because of the rising population, and have become too small to accommodate the needs of a normal-sized family. On the other hand, the more sophisticated technology becomes, the lesser would be the number of people employed in establishments.

Yet politicians, especially at election time, never tire of promising "jobs, jobs and more jobs" if elected. From where would they produce these jobs, no one knows. The entire country needs to be exposed to the national problem of employment. The days of white collar and blue collar jobs are going out, while functions that do not have the status of any collar are gaining traction.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE LOSS OF LIVES IS TRAGIC AND SAD

Sir — It is sad that many lives have been lost an encounter between the Central paramilitary forces and Maoists in the jungles of Chhattisgarh. We are diminished by the casualties on both sides. Standing on the side of humanity, we mourn for all those who died in the fierce gun battle of which there are different versions. The loss of life of both the security personnel, who tasked with protecting the interest of the State, and the Left-wing rebels who have taken to the path of armed resistance, is tragic.

It is worth pointing out that the victims of violence and counter-violence, in which uniform they are, are from impoverished social backgrounds. In making the comment that "the security forces and the Maoists were engaged in a cat-and-mouse game for the past two weeks", K Vijay Kumar, a senior security adviser in the Ministry of Home Affairs, has betrayed a cynical disregard for human life. We must be sensitive to take into account the human angle of the bloody battles. We need to acknowledge the fact that the Maoist movement has some basis in socio-economic realities and does not exist in a vacuum. The Maoists are not born; they are made; they have their grievances against the State. It is significant that the Maoists are said to have the support of local people for their political activities.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

### MVA GOVT REEKS OF CORRUPTION

Sir — It's not good on the part of Anil Deshmukh to decide to approach the Supreme Court to seek cancellation of the CBI probe against him in a corruption case. The Bombay High Court has ordered a preliminary CBI investigation against him regarding the allegations made by former Mumbai Police chief Param Bir Singh, after which Deshmukh resigned, citing moral grounds. He must keep in mind that Singh was replaced as the Mumbai Police chief last month and he has approached the Bombay High Court after a Supreme Court order. In his

## Right step in the right direction



It is time to create a safer space for stray animals not only in the Mumbai but in all cities. Several NGOs working for stray or abandoned animals must take a cue from the Virat Kohli Foundation (VKF) which will set up two animal shelters on the outskirts of Mumbai as a part of its animal welfare project. It is the right step in the right direction.

The organisation run by Kohli has collaborated with Vivaldis Health & Foods Private Ltd with

petition, he alleged that he was removed from his post because of his complaints against Deshmukh to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

The High Court has given the Central agency 15 days for a preliminary report. Following this, a delegation of the BJP leaders, led by former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, met the Governor, asking him to seek a report from Thackeray on the issue. What happened in Maharashtra reeks of corruption and shows that its roots are very deep and strong. We only hope the CBI will hold a free and fair inquiry and the Supreme Court will not listen to Deshmukh who is just trying to avoid the CBI inquiry.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### FOLLOW THE TRAFFIC RULES

Sir — It refers to the editorial 'Drive safe' (April 5). When we know that more

than 1,50,000 people die in road accidents per year in India, we must address this issue on priority. It is heartening to see that Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has come out with a stricter policy to ensure that many lives are saved. Drunken driving, minors behind the wheel and overspeeding all contribute to these fatalities. Stricter norms to issue driving licence are good but then implementing it in letter and spirit is the key. Naming and shaming the habitual offenders is must and their licence should be forfeited. In India many people manage to get a licence through unfair means even when they are not qualified. This practice must stop.

Bal Govind | Noida

## SOUNDBITE

Artificial Intelligence-assisted next-gen technologies would be employed for threat monitoring in the Indian Air Force's captive networks, including the current network upgrades.



Air Chief Marshal — RKS Bhadauria



The second wave of Coronavirus is becoming more deadly across the globe. Infection and fatality rates of the virus showed a sudden surge from March 29 to 31.

Bangladesh PM — Sheikh Hasina



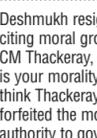
I've just started working with the Crime Patrol team. They are simply fabulous. A performer gets a high by working with such a spirited team.

Actor — Sonali Kulkarni



The tour of Argentina will be a good opportunity for the team to gather momentum for the Tokyo Olympics.

Indian hockey player — Harmanpreet Singh



Deshmukh resigned citing moral grounds. CM Thackeray, where is your morality? I think Thackeray has forfeited the moral authority to govern.

Union Minister — Ravi Shankar Prasad

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)



## FIRST COLUMN

### THE X-FACTOR IN STATE ELECTIONS

It is always unexpected and sometimes might play a positive and at other times a negative role in the polls



KALYANI SHANKAR

Are there any X-factors that could play an important role in the ongoing five State Assembly polls? The X-factors are always unexpected and might play sometimes positive and at other times a negative role in elections. In a few weeks' time, we will know which way it has played in the Assembly polls in Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry. In West Bengal, Chief Minister (CM) and Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee is fighting a fierce battle with the surging BJP. Earlier, the TMC used to fight the Congress or the Left parties but Mamata since 2011 systematically decimated them. Now she is regretting it because the space left by them has been occupied by the BJP. It is the Muslim votes that matter a lot for Mamata. This time, to counter the saffron party's influence, she is also wooing the Hindu voters. She should be worried about the role of the influential cleric Abbas Siddiqui's new party, the Indian Secular Front. The Congress-CPI(M) coalition can either damage the chances of Mamata by denting her Muslim vote bank



or polarising the voters into Hindu-Muslim division which could benefit the BJP. Since the BJP is not expecting Muslim votes, it will be the Trinamool that will be the eventual sufferer.

The X-factor in Assam could be the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF). Assam is key to BJP's rise in the north-east. An exit poll data indicates a tough contest in Assam. While the NDA is likely to corner 42.9 per cent vote share, the UPA can secure 40.7 per cent of the votes. That the AIUDF could polarise the voters on the Hindu-Muslim line would go to the advantage of the BJP, particularly in upper Assam. Also, the Congress-led coalition has no tall leader in the State while the BJP has the incumbent CM, Sarbananda Sonowal, and former Congress leader Himanta Biswa Sarma who has been the saffron party's northeast strategist. So it is again the Muslim votes that matter in Assam.

However, Tamil Nadu is a classic case where the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)-led alliance and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) coalition have been alternating in power. But that was when two iconic leaders, J Jayalithaa (AIADMK) and M Karunanidhi (DMK), were leading their parties. This will be the first election that non-charismatic leaders are on the poll scene. While incumbent CM E Palaniswami has not done badly, the DMK is led by MK Stalin who had been groomed carefully by his father Karunanidhi for years. The AIADMK suffers from many disadvantages, including anti-incumbency. Its alliance with the BJP is frowned upon by the Dravidian voters. Kerala too has followed the trend of alternating between the Left-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF). Now it is the turn of the UDF but incumbent CM Pinarayi Vijayan too has reinforced his forces by luring the Kerala Congress (Mani) into the alliance. This will be to the disadvantage of the UDF. Besides, Vijayan has managed to do well in establishing himself as a tall leader. If the LDF loses this time, the comrades will not have any Government in the whole of India. The BJP could be the X-factor in Kerala.

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

# Bank fraud: No fetters on CBI, please!

A sweeping order that the CBI will look only at frauds involving a certain amount, or higher, will send out a wrong signal. It is tantamount to glossing over the wrongdoings



UTTAM GUPTA

Even as the Government is making all efforts to ensure that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) — after witnessing 8 per cent contraction during 2020-21 — returns to a high growth trajectory, it is concerned about the tepid recovery in credit availability which is considered to be the *sine qua non* of growth. According to the latest data by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the annual non-food bank credit growth in January this year was at 5.7 per cent compared to 8.5 per cent in the same period last year. Credit to industry, however, contracted by 1.3 per cent in January 2021 as compared to 2.5 per cent growth in January 2020.

A major bottleneck is the reluctance on the part of bank officials to sanction loans, out of fear that they might come under the scanner of the investigating or prosecuting agencies for taking purely commercial decisions. During the last three years (2018-20), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered bank fraud cases involving amounts worth over ₹1,00,000 crore (in 2020 alone, it registered 200 such cases involving total ₹70,000 crore). The Government wants to allay their fears by letting the CBI look only into some 'extraordinary' cases such as the IDBI Bank-Kingfisher Airlines while the specialised agencies such as the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) being asked to investigate most other cases.

The above move is also justified in terms of what Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at an event in December 2019 — that bank employees should not be penalised for "genuine business decisions" — as also the exhortation by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the same month: "Honest bankers need not to fear the three Cs — CBI, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)". There can be no two opinions that officials should act fearlessly and free from any encumbrance, including the possibility of coming under the lens of agencies. This is a pre-requisite for building a robust credit culture and ensuring that credit availability increases in sync with the requirements. However, this gets only with situations, wherein the officials have conducted due diligence, carefully assessed the viability of the project or venture for which loan is considered and convinced themselves about the credibility of the borrower.

In such a situation, the chances of any fraud are almost negligible. Even in an unlikely event of things going wrong and the loan becoming a non-performing asset (NPA), the sheer fact that the official had conducted "due diligence" and taken all precautions while sanctioning it by itself should instil confidence. On the other hand, if the official has granted loan in a cavalier fashion without conducting due diligence or assessing project viability or has acted with mala fide for personal gain under what is termed as "quid pro quo" arrangement then, there is every possibility of the loan becoming an NPA. In such a scenario of a fraud being perpetrated on the bank, the authorities must not allow the idea of "keeping the CBI at bay" even cross their minds.



THERE CAN BE NO TWO OPINIONS THAT OFFICIALS SHOULD ACT FEARLESSLY AND FREE FROM ANY ENCUMBRANCE INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF COMING UNDER THE LENS OF AGENCIES. THIS IS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR BUILDING A ROBUST CREDIT CULTURE AND ENSURING THAT CREDIT AVAILABILITY INCREASES IN SYNC WITH THE REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, THIS SELS ONLY WITH SITUATIONS, WHEREIN, THE OFFICIALS HAVE CONDUCTED THEIR DUTY WITH DUE DILIGENCE

The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.



However, the fraud happens in a systematic manner and it is clear from the four major financial entities, viz; Yes Bank, Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank, Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) and Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL) having been pushed towards bankruptcy during the last three years solely because their top brass acted with mala fide intent while sanctioning loans.

Here are some harsh facts. Between April and June 2018, Yes Bank invested ₹3,700 crore in short-term debentures of DHFL. Almost at the same time, the chairman of the latter "paid a kick-back of ₹600 crore" to former's promoter and his family members in the garb of builder loan given to DOIT Urban Ventures — a company owned by the promoters' family. According to the CBI, despite being a short-term debenture investment, DHFL has not redeemed Yes Bank's investment to date. The DHFL is alleged to have had siphoned off ₹31,000 crore out of total bank loans of ₹97,000 crore using a web of multiple shell companies. A dubious loan of ₹6,500 crore was given by PMC to Housing Development and Infrastructure Limited (HDIL) in connivance with the bank's top brass. Likewise, tens of thousands of crores in questionable loans given by the IL&FS landed in dozens of shell companies owned by top brass of the former. Another

brazen case involves defrauding the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) by the directors of DHFL. Under the PMAY, loans are granted to people from economically weaker sections and low- and middle-income groups to buy land and construct houses, or buy housing units, through 'credit-linked interest subsidy'. The beneficiaries get interest subsidy of 3 per cent - 6.5 per cent payable upfront. The subsidy amount is to be claimed by the financial institutions (FIs), which grant these loans, from the National Housing Bank (NHB) who, in turn, gets reimbursement from the Centre.

The DHFL — an FI tasked with implementation of the scheme-created 260,000 "fake and fictitious" home loan accounts in a non-existent Bandra branch between 2007 and 2019 for a total loan of about ₹14,000 crore. Out of this, around ₹11,750 crore were deposited or routed to several fictitious firms. Several of these accounts were opened under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and interest subsidy of about ₹1,900 crore claimed from the NHB till December 2018, of which the latter has already reimbursed ₹540 crore. The DHFL top brass committed the fraud in connivance with officials of the NHB which happens to be a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RBI. Being the top regulator of the banks and FIs, the responsibility of the RBI is to prevent any fraud in these institutions and yet, such a

thing happening under its nose is unconscionable. By any stretch of imagination, it can't be a case of sheer negligence or a legitimate commercial decision going wrong. That apart, there are innumerable cases of bank fraud — each running into several crores — tumbling out of the cupboard almost every other day. These can't be wished away as an one-off incident. The frauds are an outcome of a well orchestrated game plan in which bank/FI officials are actively involved. Indeed, this is more systemic in nature, having to do with a sense of fearlessness amongst officials that even if they do something horribly wrong, they will go scot-free.

This mindset can be dealt with only by wielding a stick. The involvement of the CBI and other agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has to be seen from this perspective. In this backdrop, a sweeping order that the CBI will look only at frauds involving amount above a threshold, say, ₹500 crore, will send out a wrong signal. It is tantamount to glossing over the wrongdoings, in a way letting these continue unabated. This must be avoided. However, the officials doing their job honestly and sincerely have nothing to fear — as rightly observed by Modi and Sitharaman — those who are out there to perpetrate fraud can be reined in only by instilling fear. In such cases, the CBI should be allowed to do its job without any fetters.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

SHE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN WHICH LEG IS INJURED AND SHOOK THE WRONG FOOT. SHE HAS ALREADY LOST THE ELECTIONS. — BJP LEADER RAHUL SINHA



ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY THAT PEOPLE INVOLVED IN TREATING HER, INCLUDING DOCTORS, ARE LYING? THE BJP IS CAPABLE OF SPEAKING SUCH LIES. — TMC LEADER YASHWANT SINHA

# The rise of OTT: A great push to acting as career option

This revolution in content creation and its consumption has led to a huge demand for careers in film acting and also in show-running

India is the largest producer of films in the world and Bollywood alone is approximately a \$ 2.5 billion industry. Further, the cine industries in south India, Kolkata, Punjab and now in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh (UP) are also producing movies. Not to mention, pan-India television channels and ad films. These provide enormous employment opportunities to actors, directors, cinematographers, screen-writers and so on.



SANJAY GUPTA

The extended lockdowns witnessed the emergence of over-the-top (OTT) platforms that disrupted the traditional entertainment sector and has changed the overall scenario in a significant manner. It made movie-watching convenient, accessible and affordable across a wider segment of the users. Anybody with a mobile phone and an

The writer is the Vice-Chancellor, World University of Design. The views expressed are personal.

internet connection can catch up with a movie sitting anywhere in the world. *ALTBalaji*, for instance, performed the best in 2020 as its direct subscription grew cent per cent amassing 8.5 million monthly active users and 35 million plus cumulative subscribers in this period, with most of its new audiences coming from Tier II and Tier III cities.

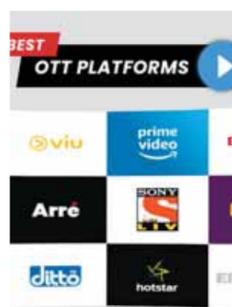
The OTT is a generic term used in telecom industry which means all services that are offered over and above what a cell phone already comes with. It usually refers subscriber-based web-streaming platforms in India whose growth curve looks steeply inclined. The OTT industry itself is only around four years old in India.

*Netflix* was the first mover, followed by *Amazon*

*Prime Video* and then more than 40 other OTT platforms. *Amazon* was the first to commission Indian originals. *Netflix* entered the domain of local content right after.

*Amazon Prime Video* has approximately 17 million paying subscribers, second only to *Disney+Hotstar* at 18 million, while *Netflix India* has five million and *Zee5* has 11 million plus subscribers. With internet reaching the semi-urban and rural areas coupled with affordable data plans, new players have entered the game, including *Hoichoi*, *Ullu*, *Addatimes*, *Sun NXT* and *MX Player*. The growth potential can be estimated when one considers that there are 625 million internet users and 836 million TV viewers in India alone.

Digital streaming companies are spending heavily to



keep the growth going. Worldwide spend was around \$21 billion in 2017, which is expected to more than double by 2022, according to *Asia on Demand*. Content spending by Asian operators is expected to reach \$10.1 billion by 2022, from \$2.7 billion in 2017. The Indian OTT market is projected to reach \$5 billion by 2023. With their

huge spends, a show on *Amazon* or *Netflix* brings legitimacy, not just within the industry, but also outside. Besides digital ads, they put up hoardings all over the city, just like cinema!

The OTT has also changed all previous casting practices and now even films want and need new, unique, different talents for the sake of freshness and spontaneity. This revolution in content creation and its consumption has led to a huge demand for careers in film acting as also in show-running.

Actors work with directors, writers and technicians to create content for cinema, web, OTT, television, advertisement, stills, video and so on. Actors must be able to work for long hours to meet the deadlines. They must also be comfortable doing a wide range of scenes and playing

various roles.

With the popularity of OTT platforms growing manifold, the Indian entertainment industry is looking forward to hire talented actors who have skills as per the demands of the industry. Casting, however, is no longer about just checking portfolios and doing auditions. Today, it is also about checking the social media credentials of budding actors, checking auditions on YouTube and doing a whole bunch of things to get the right person for the right role.

Another career that OTT has thrown up is that of showrunners. A showrunner combines the responsibilities of a director and a producer, shouldering the creative and management responsibilities of a web show production. Unlike commercial cinema, creating OTT

content irrespective of genre is a much more collaborative process, often employing multiple writers and directors to work on a series or film. This allows for more perspectives and talent to come together for a particular show or film and create a more engaging and enriching experience for the audience.

The showrunner acts as a bridge between the OTT platform and the team responsible for making the show and also makes sure that the show comes in on time and exactly as visualised by the producer. They are very highly paid and usually, a top showrunner is also the lead writer.

The glamour, money and razzmatazz of this emerging career are bringing people by the hordes to this profession and a lot many people are opting for the career which is steadily growing.

# Minorities in Myanmar face fresh fear since coup

AP ■ JAKARTA

Before each rainy season Lu Lu Aung and other farmers living in a camp for internally displaced people in Myanmar's far northern Kachin state would return to the village they fled and plant crops that would help keep them fed for the coming year.

But this year in the wake of February's military coup, with the rains not far off, the farmers rarely step out of their makeshift homes and don't dare leave their camp. They say it is simply too dangerous to risk running into soldiers from Myanmar's army or their aligned militias.

"We can't go anywhere and can't do anything since the coup," Lu Lu Aung said. "Every night, we hear the sounds of jet fighters flying so close above our camp."

The military's lethal crackdown on protesters in large central cities such as Yangon and Mandalay has received much of the attention since the coup that toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government. But far away in Myanmar's borderlands, Lu Lu Aung and millions of others who hail from Myanmar's minority ethnic



In this file photo, Karenni villagers from Myanmar arrive on a boat with an injured person as they evacuate to Ban Mae Sam Laep Health Center in Mae Hong Son province, northern Thailand. Far away in Myanmar's borderlands, millions of others who hail from Myanmar's minority ethnic groups are facing increasing uncertainty and waning security as longstanding conflicts between the military and minority guerrilla armies flare anew

groups are facing increasing uncertainty and waning security as longstanding conflicts between the military and minority guerrilla armies flare anew. It's a situation that was thrust to the forefront over the past week as the military

launched deadly airstrikes against ethnic Karen guerrillas in their homeland on the eastern border, displacing thousands and sending civilians fleeing into neighboring Thailand. Several of the rebel armies have threatened to join forces

if the killing of civilians doesn't stop, while a group made up of members of the deposed government has floated the idea of creating a new army that includes rebel groups. The U.N. Special envoy for Myanmar, meanwhile, has

warned the country faces the possibility of civil war.

Ethnic minorities make up about 40% of Myanmar's 52 million people, but the central government and the military leadership have long been dominated by the country's Burman ethnic majority. Since independence from Britain in 1948, more than a dozen ethnic groups have been seeking greater autonomy, with some maintaining their own independent armies.

That has put them at odds with Myanmar's ultranationalist generals, who have long seen any ceding of territory — especially those in border areas that are often rich in natural resources — as tantamount to treason and have ruthlessly fought against the rebel armies with only occasional periods of ceasefire.

The violence has led to accusations of abuses against all sides, such as arbitrary taxes on civilians and forced recruitment, and according to the United Nations has displaced some 239,000 people since 2011 alone. That doesn't include the more than 800,000 minority Rohingya who fled to Bangladesh to escape a military campaign the UN has called ethnic cleansing.

## Myanmar junta charges celebrities with promoting protests

AP ■ YANGON

Myanmar's ruling junta stepped up its campaign against celebrities who support nationwide protests against its seizure of power, publishing wanted lists in the state press and warning against using their work. The move follows weeks of escalating violence by security forces in breaking up street protests against the February 1 coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

At least 564 protesters and bystanders have been killed since the takeover, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, which monitors casualties and arrests.

The coup reversed the country's gradual return to democracy after five decades of military rule. The lists published Sunday and Monday in the Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper include actors, actresses, musicians and social media influencers charged with violating Section



Anti-coup protesters holding pictures of those who died during a protest against the military offer prayers for them, in Yangon, Myanmar on Monday

505(A) of the Penal Code for "spreading news to affect state stability." The penalty for the offense is up to three years' imprisonment.

A chart filling most of a page lists 20 people, along with photos, hometowns and Facebook pages of each.

Several actors and directors were also charged in February, but the campaign against celebrity protest supporters was stepped up last week when

army-controlled Myawaddy TV broadcast a wanted list. There are now at least 60 people on such lists.

May Toe Khine, who describes herself in her Twitter profile as "Full Time Burmese Actress / Part Time Fashion Designer Student," tweeted after the TV announcement that her arrest warrant was "for simply doing my job as a civilian: using my platform to speak out the truth."

### GLOBE TROTTERING

#### IRAN SAYS IT HAS HELD SPIES FOR ISRAEL

Tehran: Iranian authorities arrested several people on charges of spying for Israel and other nations, state TV announced Monday. An unnamed Intelligence Ministry official in the country's eastern Azerbaijan province was quoted by state TV as saying that security forces had detained a group of people suspected of spying for Israel and other unspecified countries.

#### TRIBAL CLASHES IN SUDAN'S DARFUR KILL 18

Cairo: Tribal clashes that erupted over the weekend between Arabs and non-Arabs in Sudan's western Darfur region have killed at least 18 people, a local medical group said on Monday. The violence between the Arab Rizeigat tribe and the Masalit in Genena, the provincial capital of West Darfur province, followed the death of two people from the Masalit, said Salah Saleh, a physician and former medical director at the city's main hospital.

#### THAILAND ORDERS BAR CLOSINGS IN CAPITAL

Bangkok: Officials in Thailand's capital on Monday ordered a two-week closure of all entertainment venues in three districts to try to limit the spread of the coronavirus from nightspots there. Health officials are also trying to cope with a coronavirus outbreak at a prison in the south.

## 27 dead as launch capsizes after collision in B'desh



Rescuers pull out a ferry that sank on Sunday night after being hit by a cargo vessel in the Shitalakkhya River in Narayanganj district, Bangladesh on Monday

PTI ■ DHAKA

At least 27 people died after a small launch carrying over 100 passengers capsized after colliding with a cargo vessel in Bangladesh's Shitalakkhya river, officials said on Monday. The incident took place on Sunday evening at Narayanganj district, about 16 km southeast of Dhaka.

While five bodies were recovered on Sunday, rescuers retrieved 22 bodies on Monday as a salvage vessel pulled out the launch with the help of a huge crane around midday, rescue officials said.

The rescue team comprised officials from Navy, Coast Guard, fire service and

police. "The salvage operation is ended," Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) Chairman Commodore Golam Sadek told newsmen here, while live TV footages showed wailing family members and relatives of the victims crowding at the scene.

The passenger vessel, ML Sabit Al Hasan, sank after colliding with the cargo ship, SKL-3, at the mouth of the Syedpur Koyla Ghat on the Shitalakkhya River in Munshiganj. The launch was en route Munshiganj.

Quoting police and onlookers, the Dhaka Tribune reported that the cargo vessel fled the scene after the collision.

## Netanyahu lashes out at prosecutors in corruption trial

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has lashed out at prosecutors in his corruption trial, accusing them of trying to oust him.

In a nationally televised statement, Netanyahu said the case against him is threatening to undermine the will of the country's voters.

"This is what a coup attempt looks like," he said. Netanyahu spoke shortly after his corruption trial resumed and with the country's president holding post-election consultations on choosing the next prime minister design-

nate. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's corruption trial resumed Monday, with a key witness painting a picture of an image-obsessed Israeli leader forcing a prominent news site to flatter his family and smear his opponents.

The testimony came as Netanyahu's chances of securing another term in office following last month's parliamentary elections appeared to be dwindling in high-stakes political talks hosted by the country's figurehead president just a few miles (kilometers) away.

Taken together, the court testimony and political consultations pointed to an increasingly uphill struggle for Netanyahu as he fights for his political life.

In a post-election ritual, President Reuven Rivlin was consulting with the various parties elected to parliament before choosing a candidate to form a new government.

With a majority of lawmakers opposed to giving Netanyahu another term, Rivlin could give the task to a different candidate, possibly as soon as Monday night. AP

## Jordan prince remains defiant in new audio recording

Beirut: Jordan's Prince Hamzah says he has been threatened by the country's security agencies but does not plan to follow their "unacceptable" orders that he remain confined at home and cut off from public communication, according to a new voice recording released Monday.

The recording, which circulated online, indicates that tensions are running high between Jordan's King Abdullah II and his half-brother Hamzah, a former crown prince. The United States

quickly sided with Abdullah, a close Western ally in a volatile region.

Jordanian authorities said on Sunday they had foiled a "malicious plot" by Hamzah to destabilise the kingdom with foreign support. Hamzah has denied being part of any plot and says he is being targeted for speaking out against corruption and poor governance.

"The army chief of staff came to me and issued threats in the name of heads of security agencies," Hamzah says in the recording. AP

## Lanka begins inoculating Chinese expats with Sinopharm

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan health authorities on Monday began inoculating Chinese nationals living in the country against the coronavirus using a Chinese vaccine.

"This was done at four different places today in Colombo, Kandy, Hambantota and Puttalam," said Chief Epidemiologist to the government Sudath Samaraweera.

## Turkey detains 10 retired admirals over Govt criticism

AP ■ ANKARA (TURKEY)

Turkish authorities on Monday detained 10 former admirals after a group of more than 100 retired top navy officers issued a statement that government officials tied to Turkey's history of military coups.

The 10 retired admirals were detained as part of an investigation, launched by the chief prosecutor in Ankara on Sunday, over suspicions that they had reached "an agreement with the aim of committing a crime against the security of the state and the constitutional order," Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

Four others were not detained because of their advanced ages, but they were asked to report to authorities within three days, Anadolu reported.

Authorities stripped the suspects of their rights to government lodgings and bodyguards, Anadolu reported, even before the investigation is concluded.

A total of 103 retired admirals signed the statement declaring their commitment to an international treaty that regulates shipping through the

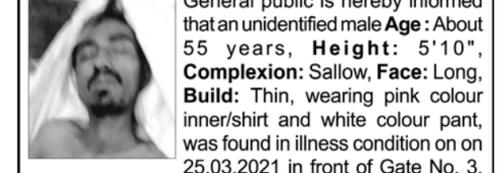


Bosporus and Dardanelles straits, which link the Mediterranean Sea to the Black Sea. The 14 suspects are believed to have organised the declaration.

The statement was issued amid a debate over whether Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who withdrew Turkey from an international convention to protect women last month, could also pull the country out of the 1936 Treaty of Montreux, which regulates the passage through the straits, and other international treaties.

Erdogan's plan to build an alternative waterway to the north of Istanbul that would bypass the Bosporus also sparked a debate over the Montreux treaty.

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



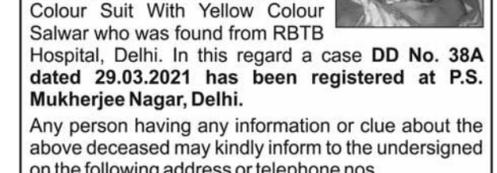
General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male Age: About 55 years, Height: 5'10", Complexion: Sallow, Face: Long, Build: Thin, wearing pink colour inner/shirt and white colour pant, was found in illness condition on on 25.03.2021 in front of Gate No. 3, Jama Masjid, Delhi. He was admitted in Lok Nayak Hospital, Delhi by CATS Ambulance. During the treatment he died on 31.03.2021. In this regard a DD No. 25-A dated 31.03.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Jama Masjid, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO : P.S. Jama Masjid, Delhi Ph.: 011-23261625, 23269777

DP/740/CD/21

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that one unidentified dead body of female Name: Savitri, W/o: Raju, R/o: H.No. T-20 Village Teh. Badi, Distt. Sonapat (Haryana), Age: 60 Years, Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Medium, Height: 5' 2", Wearing: Red Colour Suit With Yellow Colour Salwar who was found from RBTB Hospital, Delhi. In this regard a case DD No. 38A dated 29.03.2021 has been registered at P.S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the above deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO P. S. Mukherjee Nagar Tel. No. 011-27654675

DP/742/NW/2021

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
TENDER NOTICE (THROUGH E-TENDERING)

Name of Work with its location	Roll out of PMS Phase-II under the work of Computerization of Parcel Management System over major stations of DLI Division.
Approximate Cost of the work	₹26,57,151.84 only
Tender Document Fee	₹00.00 only
Earnest money Deposit	₹00.00 only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055
Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender	Tender uploading/closing date & time 05.05.2021 upto 15:00hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.irps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055
Tender No.:	558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-930 Dated: 05.04.2021 770/21

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

"Form No. INC-26"  
[Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] Before the Central Government, Regional Director, Northern Region, Delhi

In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub rule (5) of Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND

In the matter of SURBHI NETWORKING & BROADCASTING PRIVATE LIMITED  
CIN-U22222DL2006PTC153724  
having its registered office at - A-115, Ground Floor Vakli Chamber, Shakarpur Delhi 110092, Petitioner

**Notice**

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the Company proposes to make application to the Central Government under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Tuesday 9th March, 2021 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "State of Delhi" to "State of Madhya Pradesh".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Northern Region Bench, B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex New Delhi- 110003, within fourteen (14) days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy of the applicant company at its registered office at A-115, Ground Floor Vakli Chamber, Shakarpur Delhi 110092, IN.

For and on behalf of the petitioner  
Surbhi Networking & Broadcasting Private Limited  
Jyoti Gorana  
Director  
DIN: 08382424

Dated: 6th April, 2021  
Place: Delhi

## Malaysian ex-PM Najib appeals graft conviction in 1MDB saga

Putrajaya: A Malaysian court on Monday began hearing an appeal by ex-Prime Minister Najib Razak to overturn his conviction and 12-year jail sentence linked to the massive looting of the 1MDB state investment fund that brought down his government in 2018.

The appeal came more than eight months after a high court found Najib guilty of abuse of power, criminal breach of trust and money laundering, making him the first Malaysian leader to be convicted. He has said he was misled by rogue bankers and that the case against him is political. The rul-

ing was part of the first of several corruption trials against Najib that are linked to the 1MDB scandal, which sparked investigations in the US and several other countries. US Investigators alleged that over \$4.5 billion was stolen from 1MDB and laundered by Najib's associates.

Najib, 67, arrived at the Court of Appeal early Monday but didn't speak to reporters. Najib, who set up 1MDB shortly after taking office in 2009, has denied all wrongdoing and his sentence was stayed pending the appeal. AP

## Rescuers hampered by damaged roads, more rain in Indonesia

AP ■ LEMBATA

Rescuers were hampered by damaged bridges and roads and a lack of heavy equipment Monday after torrential rains caused multiple disasters on remote eastern Indonesian islands as well as in East Timor.

At least 73 people died and dozens are missing in Indonesia, and 27 deaths were reported in East Timor. A tropical cyclone causing the damage is expected to continue affecting the Southeast Asian nations for days while moving south toward Australia.

Mud tumbled down from surrounding hills onto dozens of homes in Lamenele village

shortly after midnight Sunday on Adonara island in East Nusa Tenggara province. Rescuers recovered 38 bodies and at least five people were injured, said Lenny Ola, who heads the local disaster agency.

Flash floods killed at least 33 people elsewhere and at least 70 are missing in the province, according to the National Disaster Mitigation Agency.

Severe flooding also has been reported in Bima, a town in the neighbouring province of West Nusa Tenggara, killing two people and submerging nearly 10,000 houses. Relief efforts were hampered by power outages, blocked roads covered in thick mud and debris.

## Putin signs law that allows him to serve two more terms

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday signed a law allowing him to potentially hold onto power until 2036, a move that formalises constitutional changes endorsed in last year's popular vote.

The July 1 constitutional vote included a provision that

reset Putin's previous terms, allowing him to run for president two more times. The change was rubber-stamped by the Kremlin-controlled legislature and the relevant law signed by Putin was posted Monday on an official portal of legal information. AP

## Lavrov to arrive in Pak today on two-day visit

Islamabad: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will arrive in Pakistan on Tuesday on a two-day official visit during which he will hold talks with his counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi and discuss ways to further deepen bilateral cooperation in diverse fields, the Foreign Office said on Monday.

Lavrov will also call on Prime Minister Imran Khan and interact with other top dignitaries, it added.

"The two foreign ministers will review the entire gamut of Pakistan-Russia relations and discuss ways to further broaden and deepen bilateral cooperation in diverse fields," the FO said. They will also exchange views on regional and international issues, it added. Foreign Minister Lavrov's visit is part of the growing interaction and regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Russia. PTI

**CORRIGENDUM**  
ICICI Bank  
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Reference to publication of ICICI Bank vs RAKESH BILLA with Case no. 192/2019, of March 20, 2021. Auction venue of vehicle of said case is Ridhi Godara, Kataria Chowk, Sector-17, Sukhrali Gaon, Behind Air Force station, Gurgaon and remain content is unchanged.

Dated: April 08, 2021  
Place : Delhi/INCR Sd/-

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
To be known to all that I, AJAY, S/O LATE SH. OM PRAKASH, R/o 3395/97, GALI LALLU MISHRA, QUTUB ROAD, SADAR BAZAR, DELHI-110006, has applied for conversion from lease hold to free hold in respect of PROPERTY BEARING KH. NO. 295/1/1, MEASURING 116 SQ YRDS, SITUATED AT GALI LALLU MISHRA, QUTUB ROAD, SADAR BAZAR, DELHI-110006, vide application No. 201405 dated 12/04/2017, the original document i.e. Original Perpetual Lease Deed, Original Registry & other relevant documents of the above property have been lost. An FIR in this effect has lodged in Police Station Crime Branch, Delhi/New Delhi, vide NCH/LR No.281877/2021.

Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/ phone No. 7982279050 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (OSB) or Director, A-Block, 2nd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023.

Bral Veer Singh, Advocate M.A. LL.B. 21, U.G.F. Lane No. 5, New Govind Pura, Delhi-110051 EN. No.: D-2415/12

# Economic recovery resilient: FinMin report

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

As the country witnesses a rapid resurgence of coronavirus cases, a Finance Ministry report has exuded confidence in the Indian economy and termed the economic recovery as resilient citing improvement in high frequency indicators.

The Monthly Economic Review for March 2021 released by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) said that the agricultural sector remains the bright spot of Indian economy with food-grains production touching 303.3 million tonnes in 2020-21 beating record production levels for the fifth consecutive year in a row.

Further, MGNREGS has acted as a strong pillar to insulate the rural economy by generating all-time high employment of 383.8 crore person days during 2020-21, 44.7 per cent higher compared to previous year.

"Despite the surge in cases, the recovery in economy is resilient with sustained improvement in the majority of high frequency indicators," it said.

The report noted that India's PMI Manufacturing Index of 55.4 in March indicated some loss of momentum compared to February. However, manufacturing sector conditions continue to improve sharply, outpacing the long-run series average with firms scaling up production and witnessing upturn in sales.

Further, strengthening in demand conditions could be clearly seen in auto sales and power consumption. Monthly GST collections attained all-time record levels in March, since its inception.

The report highlighted the second wave of Covid-19 infection in India with the rise in daily new cases since mid of February. The department, however, is of the view that

India has been able to delay the onset of the second wave as the gap between the first peak to start of second wave has been 151 days in India while it was much lower in other countries.

"At this juncture of onset of the second wave, India is well prepared to combat the scourge of the virus. It is well-equipped with adequate testing and health infrastructure and economic activity has adapted to the pandemic." Concerns, however, have been growing with the surging number of cases. India registered over 1.03 lakh new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, the highest ever single-day spike since the onset of the pandemic last year, taking the total tally to 1,25,89,067 on Monday.

Fears of local restrictions and lockdowns too have grown which may impact business and economic activities. Maharashtra, already has announced night curfew and weekend lockdown.

## Covid resurgence subdues India's manufacturing sector output: PMI

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Loss of growth momentum, due to a surge in Covid-19 cases as well as high input cost pressure, decelerated pace of new orders and production for India's manufacturing sector in March.

The IHS Markit India Manufacturing PMI report said that firms scaled up production and input buying in line with another upturn in sales, but employment decreased due to the pandemic curbs and a lack of pressure on capacity.

On the price front, the

rate of input cost inflation was among the strongest seen over the past three years, the report said. However, selling prices increased only moderately as companies limited their adjustments to retain a competitive edge and boost sales. Consequently, the headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 57.5 in February to a seven-month low of 55.4 in March.

The PMI ranges between 0 and 100, with a reading above 50 indicating an overall increase compared to the previous month.

## Bank union calls for vaccination for all employees in Maha

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With alarming rise in Covid-19 cases in Maharashtra, a bank union has written to Bank of Maharashtra, the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) convenor of the state, requesting a special vaccination drive for all bank employees.

On Sunday, Maharashtra reported the highest single-day rise of 57,074 coronavirus positive cases, while 222 patients succumbed to the infection, according to the state health department. "We request you to make special arrangements for vaccination of all bank employees who are frontline warriors in fighting Covid," Maharashtra State Bank Employees Federation General Secretary Devidas Tuljapurkar wrote in the letter addressed to the general manager (SLBC), Bank of Maharashtra.

## BRIEFS

### BRPL ENERGISES WATER ATM IN MEERA BAGH

BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) has been lending a helping hand to the needy through its CSR 'Sparsh' programs. As part this, the discom has energized a Water ATM in Meera Bagh, Paschim Vihar, its 2nd in West Delhi. It will provide 20 litres of pure & affordable drinking-water daily to over 1500 families living in that area. The first Water ATM was installed in the Shakur Basti area.



### GAIL TO INVEST IN START-UPS OPERATING IN FOCUS AREAS

New Delhi: In a bid to support the Start-Ups operating in identified Focus Areas, GAIL (India) Limited announced its plans to invest in such companies through its Start-Up initiative 'Pankh'. GAIL has now opened a fresh Round for Solicitation of Investment Proposals from the Start-Ups operating in the Focus Areas, which mainly includes natural gas, petrochemicals, energy, project management, bio-manure marketing, nano materials, IoT, data mining, environment, health and social. The further details of Focus Areas are available on GAIL website under GAIL PANKH Section. The Start-Ups that are interested in equity investment from GAIL can apply through link 'GAIL PANKH' on GAIL's website <https://gailonline.com>. The Solicitation Round is open from March 30, 2021 to May 30, 2021.

### NMDC DELIVERS SPECTACULAR PERFORMANCE IN FY21

Hyderabad: NMDC, the country's largest Iron Ore producer, has witnessed a spectacular growth for FY21 both in production and sales performance over the CPLY. Iron ore production for FY21 stands at 34.11 MT as against the 31.49 MT in FY20, and registered a growth of 8%. Iron Ore sales during the FY21 increased by 6% at 33.27 MT as against the 31.51 MT in FY20. Quarterly Production & Sales of 12.31 MT and 11.11 MT in Q4 are the highest ever since inception and are more by 2.84 MT (30%) and 2.49 (29%) over previous year. The Bailadila Projects at Chhattisgarh have produced 26.56 MT in FY21 as compared to last year's production of 24.49 MT and registered a growth of 8% in production.



## Sensex sinks 870 points as Covid spike spooks investors

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks wilted under widespread selling on Monday as a record single-day jump in Covid-19 cases in the country unnerved investors and fanned fears over the economic recovery.

A sharp plunge in the rupee added to the concerns, traders said.

After plunging over 1,400 points earlier in the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex pared some losses to finish at 49,159.32, down 870.51 points or 1.74 per cent.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty sank 229.55 points or 1.54 per cent to 14,637.80.

Bajaj Finance was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, plunging 5.81 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, SBI, and M&M, Axis Bank, Bajaj Auto and ICICI Bank.

IT stocks stood tall amid the carnage, with HCL Tech leading the gainers' chart with a jump of 3.08 per cent.

TCS, Infosys, Bharti Airtel and Tech Mahindra were the other winners, gaining up to 2.32 per cent. India recorded an all-time high of 1,03,558 coronavirus infections

in a day, pushing the nationwide COVID-19 tally to 1,25,89,067, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Monday. The single-day rise in cases surpassed the earlier peak of 97,894 infections reported on September 17 last year, making it the highest since the pandemic began.

"The market witnessed a huge sell-off today as India's second wave of COVID-19 is getting bigger than anticipated and is expected to ruin the pace of economic recovery. High valuation added further concern due to a possible downgrade in Q1FY22 earnings," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

## Sugar sales hit due to Covid-19; cooperative mills seek more time to clear unsold quota: NFCSF

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) on Monday demanded that the government give more time to clear the unsold sugar quota as sales have been hit due to the pandemic. Mills are also finding it difficult to sell sugar at a government-fixed rate of Rs 31 per kg. They are facing fund crunch and not able to make

cane payment to growers on time, it said. With slump in sugar demand, NFCSF urged the government to allocate lesser sugar quota for sale in the next month. For April, the government has fixed a record sugar sale quota of 22 lakh tonnes.

The government fixes sugar sale quota every month based on production figures of mills across the country so that all small and big mills can sell

sugar. According to NFCSF President Jaiprakash Dandegaonkar, there has been reduced sugar sales by nearly 1 million tonne due to sluggish demand owing to the nationwide lockdown imposed in March last year.

## Rupee declines by 18 paise to 73.30 on Covid concerns

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee declined by 18 paise to close at 73.30 against the US currency on Monday on strong dollar in global markets and risk aversion in the domestic market amid concerns over rising COVID-19 cases. Losses in domestic equity markets also weighed on investors' sentiment.

## Gold marginally lower; silver declines ₹216

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold was marginally lower by ₹15 to ₹44,949 per 10 gram in the national capital on Monday amid muted trading and tepid global trends, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at ₹44,964 per 10 gram. Silver also dipped by ₹216 to ₹64,222 per kilogram from ₹64,438 per kilogram in the previous trade.

## Traditional firms becoming digital-first enterprises

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Colleges and schools with traditional learning approaches are reinventing to stay relevant through immersive digital experiences. Hospitals are now enabling improved zero wait online patient experiences for first-level medical consul-

## Traditional firms becoming digital-first enterprises

tations knowing that access to first level quality of medical care is now not bound by any physical location. Traditional banks are in midst of an existential crisis. They are transforming to compete with new-age fintech companies and new banks," said Ashwin Shivakumar, Jugular Social Group founder.

But it is important for business owners to find digital practitioners, consultants and partners during their initial years of journey to become digital-first businesses, he added.

## DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-III SECTOR-VII, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI-110022

"STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene. N.I.T. NO.54(2020-21)SW-III

S. No.	Description	Amount put to Tender, Tender Fee	Date of release of tender in E-Procurement Solution	Last date/Time of receipt of Tender Through E-Procurement Solution
1.	Removing contamination by replacement of old water line by 100 mm dia DI pipe in B-7 Safderjung Enclave & Extn. Under SW-III	Rs. 36,13,524/- Rs. 500/-	31-03-2021 Tender I.D.No. 2021_DJB_202563_1	15-04-2021 At 2:00 P.M.
2.	Renovation of A-2 UGR boundary w: rooms at Safderjung Enclave under EE(SW)-III	Rs. 25,99,891/- Rs. 500/-	31-03-2021 Tender I.D.No. 2021_DJB_202563_2	15-04-2021 At 2:00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at (<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>)

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 19 (2021-22)

(Naaveen Kumar Khare) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SW)-III

## NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice

No. CIID/SLR/Tender/2020 (Part V) Dated: 05.04.2021

The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/Freight, Northern Railway, New Delhi invites E-tender for the contract of leasing of SLR/SLRD space in the following special trains originating from various stations over Delhi Division.

Tender Opening Date : 27.04.2021

S. No.	Train No.	From	To	Comptt	CC	Freq- uency	R.P. (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Tender Cost (including GST @18% in Rs.)	Tender No.
1	02950	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	BDS (Bandra Terminus)	3.9	FSLR	Thu	20830	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02950-April 21
2	04739	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	BKN (Bikaner)	4	FI	Fri & Sun	11790	100000	1180	SLR-FI-04739-April 21
3	04739	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	BKN (Bikaner)	4	RI	Fri & Sun	11790	100000	1180	SLR-RI-04739-April 21
4	04021	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	JP (Jaipur)	4	FI	Tue, Thu & Sat	7899	100000	1180	SLR-FI-04021-April 21
5	04021	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	JP (Jaipur)	4	FII	Tue, Thu & Sat	7899	100000	1180	SLR-FII-04021-April 21
6	04021	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	JP (Jaipur)	4	RI	Tue, Thu & Sat	7899	100000	1180	SLR-RI-04021-April 21
7	02226	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	AMH (Azamgarh)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	13506	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02226-April 21
8	04521	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	UMB (Ambala Cantt.)	4	FI	Daily	6048	100000	1180	SLR-FI-04521-April 21
9	04521	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	UMB (Ambala Cantt.)	4	RI	Daily	6048	100000	1180	SLR-RI-04521-April 21
10	03414	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	MLDT (Malda Town)	4	FI	Mon, Wed & Sat	22642	100000	1180	SLR-FI-03414-April 21
11	04014	ANVT (Anand Vihar (T))	SLN (Sultanpur)	3.9	FSLR	Mon & Sat	10776	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-04014-April 21
12	04008	ANVT (Anand Vihar (T))	RXL (Raxaul Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Tue & Thu	19448	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-04008-April 21
13	04016	ANVT (Anand Vihar (T))	RXL (Raxaul Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Fri & Sun	19448	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-04016-April 21
14	05026	ANVT (Anand Vihar (T))	MAU (Mau Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Mon & Fri	13861	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-05026-April 21
15	02630	NZM (Hazrat Nizamuddin)	YPR (Yesvantpur)	4	RI	Wed & Fri	34219	100000	1180	SLR-RI-02630-April 21
16	02780	NZM (Hazrat Nizamuddin)	VSG (Vasco Da Gama)	4	RI	Daily	30693	100000	1180	SLR-RI-02780-April 21
17	02692	NZM (Hazrat Nizamuddin)	SBC (KSR Bengaluru)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	39220	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02692-April 21
18	02452	NDLS (New Delhi)	CNB (Kanpur Central)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	8205	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02452-April 21
19	02802	NDLS (New Delhi)	PURI (Puri)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	26315	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02802-April 21
20	02302	NDLS (New Delhi)	HWH (Howrah)	3.9	FSLR	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat & Sun	27981	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-02302-April 21

Interested bidders may please visit official website for e-tendering i.e. [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) for further details and submitting tender.

Important Note:

- Bidders who wish to participate in the E-tendering, will have to procure class-3 valid Digital Security Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act, 2000. Bidders can procure this certificate from any of the certifying authority of Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA) Government of India. Details of certifying authorities can be obtained from [www.cca.gov.in](http://www.cca.gov.in).
- Bidders, who want to participate in this E-tender will be required to register on Indian Railways website [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in) through a valid class-3 Digital Security Certificate (DSC), if not registered earlier. All information related to bidder registration and participation in this E-tender is available on the official website of Indian Railways [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in).
- Railway Administration reserves the full and absolute rights to short terminate these tenders/contracts at any point of time (or for taking any decision regarding the discontinuation/continuation of these tenders/contracts with modified/additional terms and conditions) depending upon the continuation/discontinuation of these special trains or commencement of correspondence regular train services.
- Kindly carefully read and follow the General Instructions, Instructions to tenderers and "Terms and Conditions" (including certain new modified instructions/conditions) given in the Tender Document before submitting the ONLINE BID. 771/2021

Serving Customers With A Smile

## NHAI files papers with Sebi for InvIT; plans to raise ₹5,100 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) on Monday filed draft papers with markets regulator Sebi for floating an Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) through which it seeks to raise Rs 5,100 crore.

InvITs are instruments on the pattern of mutual funds and are designed to pool small sums of money from a number of investors to invest in assets that give cash flow over a period of time.

NHAI plans to mop up total of Rs 5,100 crore through fresh issue, as per the draft papers filed with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

In addition, there would be an offer-for-sale (OFS). However, the OFS amount has not been specified in the draft papers.

The units are proposed to be listed on the National Stock Exchange and the BSE.

ICICI Securities, Kotak

Mahindra Capital Company and SBI Capital Markets have been appointed as merchant bankers to the issue.

In December 2019, the Union Cabinet had given nod to the NHAI to set up an InvIT and monetise national highway projects.

The move was aimed at enabling NHAI to monetise completed national highways that have a toll collection track record of at least one year and it reserves the right to levy toll on the identified highway.

In January this year, state-owned Power Grid Corporation of India filed draft papers with Sebi for launching an InvIT through which it was seeking to garner more than Rs 5,000 crore. While Sebi first notified the regulations for InvITs and REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts) in 2014, only a few such trusts have listed their units in the country so far.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Mr. Desh Bandhu Gupta is the owner and in possession of the Flat No. 36, First Floor, Type A-3, DDA Janta Flats, Panchsheel, New Delhi -17 (Property). He has lost and thus unable to trace following documents in respect of the said Property, namely (1) Original NOC for electric and water connection, (2) Original Possession Slip, (3) All Bank Payments Challans/Receipt (4) Original Sale File Executed between Diwar Lal and Bina Luthra, (5) Original Sale file executed between Bina Luthra and Desh Bandhu Gupta, (6) Original Conveyance Deed, (8) Some Electricity, Water and House Tax Receipts. A specific intimation has been made to the concerned police station in respect of loss of above mentioned documents, which is registered against LR No: 205781/2021 Dated 06.03.2021. If any person is having any objection against the ownership claims of Mr. Desh Bandhu Gupta over said Property, he/she/they are advised to file objection, only in writing before the undersigned, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be assumed that no third-party claims/objections exists challenging ownership of Mr. Desh Bandhu Gupta over said property. Further, in case original documents as mentioned above are found by anyone, the same be returned to the undersigned, Deepak Dahiya, Advocate, Legal Imperials, Plot No. 11, First Floor, Local Shopping Complex, Pocket B1, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi - 110070. Mobile No. 9540233456, 9560233456. Email: [egalimperials.com](mailto:egalimperials.com)

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Dharmendra Singh Dahiya, S/o Major Dharam Singh, R/o Jeet House, Church Wall Gali, Holy Child School Road, Sonipat, Haryana Age: Approx 47 years, Height: 6', Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Normal, wearing Violet colour Shirt and Jeans Pant, Brown Shoes in feet,** has been missing from AAAGH, Civil Lines, Delhi since 15.03.2021. In this regard a **DD No. 100A, dated 16.03.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Civil Lines, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about him please inform undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>  
E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Fax: 011-24368639  
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641

**SHO P.S. Civil Lines, Delhi DP/1039/N/2021 Ph.: 011-23810633, 23815444**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby informed to general public by Surbhi Hospital Sector-35, Noida (8744002892) that all documents pertaining to patient care before 1st January 2015 are going to be destroyed by shredder on 10/07/2021, any claimant after that shall not be able to get any documents pertaining to Hospital care. Hospital will is no way be responsible for any eventuality.

By Order  
Medical Superintendent  
Surbhi Hospital Pvt. Ltd. Noida, U.P.

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely: **Uma@Urvashi, D/o: Sukh Lal, R/o: H.No.87, Signalpur Village, Delhi,** has been missing/kidnapped since 25.03.2021 at about 4:00 pm from the area of P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 1A dated 26.03.2021** has been registered at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. The description of the missing /kidnapped girl is as under: **Age: 20 years, Height: 5', Face: Round, Built: Medium, Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Orange colour suit-salwar and slipper in her feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>  
E-mail Id - [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No. 011-24368639

**SHO P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi DP/736/NW/2021 Ph.: 011- 27495198, 8750870226**

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown.** Age about 30 years, Height about 5'6", Face long, Complexion shallow, Hair black & white wearing White colour shirt, Black colour lower and bare footed was admitted in BSA Hospital, Delhi on 31.03.2021 vide MLC No. 17682/21 where doctor declare him brought dead.

In this regard a DD No. 06-A dated 31.03.2021 has been lodged at PS North Rohini, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased person may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.

**SHO PS North Rohini, Delhi DP/759/RD/2021 Ph. 011-27048210, 9518033455**

**NOTICE**

Mr. Nipun Jain holder of Indian Passport bearing No. T2444000 issued at Dubai on 04/02/2019 and Ms. Nikita Garg holder of Indian Passport bearing No. P0317476 issued at Kolkata on 12/07/2016 intend getting married at Abu Dhabi under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi within 30 days on telephone No. 00971 2 4492700 or by e-mail: [cons.abudhabi@mea.gov.in](mailto:cons.abudhabi@mea.gov.in)



# HEALTH

## NotSoSweet

A diet low on sugar may help keep our muscles healthier for longer, suggests a study. With the wear and tear of everyday use, our muscles continuously repair themselves to keep them in top condition. Researchers from Tokyo Metropolitan University in Japan found that skeletal muscle satellite cells, key for muscle repair, rapidly increases in low glucose environments



## BE HIGH ON IMMUNITY

A healthy system is not just dependent on one thing, but is a sum of a balanced diet over a period of time, says DR RASHI CHAHAL

What you eat has a clear impact on your immunity. Immunity refers to the ability of one's body to fight or prevent any invasion of foreign particles or pathogens. Immune response is when the body fights back to protect your body.

In this period of pandemic, not only there was an increase in usage of these supplements; but also we as humans were made to believe that what the bottles claim to really boost your immune system and ward off allergies. There is no magic bullet to bolster the immune system. It's a defense system that your body has had it ever since you were born. This defense system has been in action from day one till date!

Vitamins can help ward off health problems and probiotics can help bacteria and organism living in your gut which plays a vital role in your wellbeing.

A truly a healthy system is just not dependent on one thing — Vitamin C, Vitamin D, etc. but is a sum of balanced healthy diet over a period of time that includes carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals and lastly water!

Vitamins and minerals that are essential to improve one's well being are:

**Vitamin C:** It helps prevent or shorten the infection's stay. Studies prove that a regular intake of Vitamin C acts like a scavenger in one's body. Vitamin C rich fruits are the best to meet your daily intake but other good sources are: spinach, kale, bell peppers, guava, strawberries, papaya, etc.

**Vitamin E:** Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant which plays a critical role in the functioning of the immune system. It can be found easily in plant based oils, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables.

**Vitamin A:** It not only improves vision and adds shine on your skin but is also an infection-fighter. Its best absorbed from an egg, fortified cereals, sweet potato, pumpkin.

**Vitamin D:** Also called as a sunshine vitamin and the best source is sunlight. It is a fat soluble vitamin which improves intestinal absorption of calcium magnesium and phosphate. It's most important role is to regulate hormones in our body. It is one of the powerful nutrients for supporting the immune system.

**Folate:** Vitamin B9 and B12 play a crucial role in healthy balance of the immune system. To get more of folate in your diet include beans, green leafy vegetables and lentils to your routine on a regular basis.

**Iron:** It helps your body carry oxygen to cells and different organs. Iron is essential for the activation and proliferation of immune cells.

**Zinc:** It is needed for the production of new immune cells in your body. It's commonly found in animal products like chicken, fish, and eggs. It is also found in good quantities in curd, chickpeas and lentils.

**Selenium:** Another nutrient which has a powerful impact as it helps lower oxidative stress in your body, which reduces inflammation and enhances immunity. Commonly found in nuts (brazil nuts), lean meats, broccoli and cottage cheese.

The writer is Nutritionist, Rosewalk Hospital, Panchsheel Park

# HUNTING DOWN HUNTINGTON'S

World Health Day is on April 7, 2021. To mark the occasion, MUSBA HASHMI speaks with DR RAJNISH KUMAR, who throws light on Huntington's disease and explains why it is important to increase awareness about rare diseases



One of the many lessons that COVID has taught us is, of course, health is wealth. While many of us have started prioritising our overall wellbeing and has become more aware of the diseases that pose a threat to our health, there are still several diseases that failed to make it into our priority lists. One such disease, that is rare and dangerous too is Huntington's disease.

It is an inherited disease that causes the progressive breakdown (degeneration) of nerve cells in the brain.

"Huntington's disease has a broad impact on a person's functional abilities and usually results in movement, thinking (cognitive) and psychiatric disorders. The symptoms can develop at any time, but they often first appear when people are in their 30s or 40s. If the condition develops before age 20, it's called juvenile Huntington's disease. The symptoms are different and the disease may progress faster," Dr Rajnish Kumar, Senior Consultant & Unit Head, Neurology, Paras Hospital Gurugram, tells you.

When Huntington's develops early, symptoms are somewhat different and the disease may progress faster. Medications are available to help manage the symptoms of the disease. "But treatments can't prevent the physical, mental and behavioural decline associated with the condition," Kumar adds.

No disease can occur out of the blue. Your body, always, gives red flags when something is not right inside you. "Movement disorders like involuntary jerking or writhing movements (chorea), rigidity or muscle contracture (dystonia), slow or abnormal eye movements, impaired gait, posture and balance

and difficulty with speech or swallowing are some of the signs and symptoms of the disease," Kumar explains.

Cognitive disorders like difficulty organising, prioritising or focusing on tasks, lack of flexibility or the tendency to get stuck on a thought, behaviour or action (perseveration), lack of impulse control that can result in outbursts, acting without thinking and sexual promiscuity, lack of awareness of one's own behaviours and abilities, slowness in processing thoughts or "finding" words and difficulty in learning new information are some of the other symptoms to look out for.

"Behavioural changes including difficulty in paying attention and rapid, significant drop in overall school performance. Physical changes including tremors or slight involuntary movements, frequent falls or clumsiness and seizures can also be seen in patients," Kumar tells you.

A preliminary diagnosis of Huntington's disease is based primarily on your answers to questions, a general physical exam, a review of your family medical history and neurological and psychiatric examinations. "Your doctor may also ask you to go for brain-imaging tests for assessing the structure or function of the brain. The imaging technologies may include MRI or CT scans that show detailed images of the brain. These images may reveal changes in the brain in areas affected by Huntington's disease. However, these changes may not show up early in the course of the disease.

"Medications can lessen some symptoms of movement and psychiatric disorders, but there is no

The disease has a broad impact on a person's functional abilities and usually results in movement, thinking and psychiatric disorders. The symptoms can develop any time. They often first appear when people are in their 30s or 40s



## DOCYARD

DR KUMUD KUMAR DHITAL

Program & Surgical Director, Institute of Heart & Lung Transplantation YASHODA GROUP OF HOSPITALS, HYDERABAD



## Increase your lungevity



There are several life saving surgeries that have increased, if not more, the life span of patients suffering from dangerous diseases. A case in point is Pulmonary Endarterectomy, a specialist surgical procedure for Pulmonary Hypertension (PH) resulting from a condition called Chronic Thromboembolic Pulmonary Hypertension (CTEPH). In the context of CTEPH, untreated pulmonary hypertension of >40mmHg has a poor prognosis with a five-year survival of 30% and if the pulmonary pressure is >50 mmHg, then the five-year survival is only 10%.

The following describes what CTEPH is, how it presents, how it is diagnosed and what treatment options are available.

Chronic Thromboembolic Pulmonary Hypertension (CTEPH) is a relatively rare, but potentially lethal and significantly underdiagnosed condition. It is one of many conditions that leads to PH and usually caused by blood clots or thrombi which narrow or block one or more arteries in the lung. An estimated 800 individuals per million population will have a PE of which 4% will develop CTEPH and up to a quarter of them will benefit from a surgical procedure called Pulmonary Endarterectomy (PEA). If these blood clots, which stick to the internal walls of the pulmonary arteries, do not disappear on their own or following treatment with blood thinning medication, then the right ventricle struggles to pump blood into the lung circulation so that less oxygen is available for normal activity. This triggers the onset of symptoms.

In time, these unresolved blood clots become organised into a chronic scar tissue and continue to restrict the normal flow of blood within the pulmonary circulation. The diagnosis of CTEPH is confirmed once there is evidence of chronic clots within the pulmonary arteries despite three months of treatment with blood-thinning anticoagulant medication and the mean pulmonary artery pressure is equal to or more than 25 mmHg on a right heart catheter study with normal left heart function.

PEA, historically referred to as Pulmonary Thromboendarterectomy, is a complex surgical procedure that is a curative treatment for selected patients diagnosed with advanced CTEPH. Surgery involves general anaesthesia, a mid-line opening of the chest (sternotomy) as per most heart operations and the use of the heart-lung machine. As it is impossible to see through blood, the procedure requires cooling the body to 20 degree Celsius (deep hypothermia) and periods of circulatory arrest so that no blood is flowing. This technique of deep hypothermic circulatory arrest is a very safe and well established practice in cardiothoracic surgery. It permits excellent visualisation of the disease so that all of the obstructive material can be removed to re-establish adequate blood flow in the pulmonary arteries. Sometimes, a portion of the disease that is very distal in the pulmonary arteries may not be amenable to PEA surgery. This results in some patients being left with a degree of residual disease and associated PH which may necessitate a combination of medical and BPA treatment.

The outcomes from PEA surgery depend on the degree of PH, the extent and distribution of the disease, as well as patient age and other concomitant medical conditions. In experienced centres with a focused CTEPH team, the immediate risk of surgery is under 5%. For those patients whose pulmonary pressures return to normal immediately after surgery, the outcome is excellent with a survival prognosis similar to peers of the same age in the community. When all high and low risk patients are grouped together, the expected survival following hospital discharge is around 90% at five years, 80% at 10 years and 60% at 15 years.

## SUMMER COOLERS

**KIWI:** Kiwi is an exotic fruit rich in Vitamin C, which acts as a powerful antioxidant. It also helps in boosting the immunity of the body against harmful pathogens.

It also contains an enzyme known as actinidin which helps in the digestion of proteins in the body and is also known to help patients suffering from irritable bowel syndrome. Kiwi is alkaline in nature, which means it helps in countering the effects of acidic foods. A healthy body is one which has

a good pH balance, which helps in keeping you active, full of energy, and with a youthful skin.

It is loaded with other vitamins and minerals such as

Vitamin A, B6, B12, E, and potassium, calcium, iron and magnesium which collectively contribute to the proper functioning of the body such as blood circulation through the vessels, fight stress, iron absorption for healthy bones and teeth, good vision and many others.



## DadiKaKehna

Upset stomach and indigestion are common. ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can help treat the pain, discomfort and other symptoms related to it



An upset stomach isn't a serious issue, but it definitely is uncomfortable for the one experiencing it. While popping pills can be a solution in extreme cases, one can definitely take help from home remedies in mild cases.

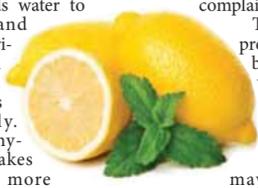
Drink plenty of water. Keeping your body hydrated at all times is the key to fighting several infections and keeping the diseases at bay. In case of stomach, the body needs water to digest and absorb nutrients from foods and beverages efficiently. Being dehydrated makes digestion more difficult and less effective, which increases the

likelihood of an upset stomach.

Mint can help. It is known for preventing vomiting and diarrhea, reducing muscle spasms in the intestines and relieving pain. One can boil a few mint leaves and add it in water and drink.

Studies suggest that mixing lime or lemon juice in water with a pinch of baking soda can help to relieve a variety of digestive complaints.

This mixture produces carbonic acid, which may help to reduce gas and indigestion. It may also improve liver secretion and intestinal mobility.



## Once a day is enough

Once-a-day sanitiser may just be what the doctor ordered for — convenient and fuss free. PIONEER HEALTH tells you more

Just like your mobile and wallet, carrying sanitiser has become an essential part of your travelling routine.

While the market is full of options, Swanrose India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Swanrose Inc, a US-based entity, has announced the launch of once-a-day hand sanitiser — Just Human.

The world's first one time use hand sanitiser makes use of nanotechnology to keep you protected day long and is being manufactured in India with US technology and approved by USFDA and also by DCGI (Drugs Controller General of India).

Here is how the technology work.

**How does Just Human 24-hour hand sanitiser work?**

Our 24-hour sanitisers add a long lasting antibacterial protective layer to hands. Once dry, the sanitiser resembles a layer of



Roshini Sarah Jaiswal CEO of Swanrose Inc

microscopic pins that pierce and kill pathogens upon contact with your skin. It works as a protective shield on your hands.

**What are the ingredients?**

The product is made from 70 per cent alcohol as the active ingredient. The ethyl alcohol denatures the protective outer proteins of pathogens and dissolves their outer membranes hence, killing them instantly

and completely. The 24-hour protection is due to a compound — Quaternary Ammonium Compound (QAC). This is responsible for the long-lasting protective layer. The layer stays active for extended periods once dry and does not lose its effects even if you wash your hands.

**Is it safe to use on children?**

Compared to regular sanitisers, this one is less toxic and can be safely used on your and your children's hands. This sanitiser can be used safely around pets and plants as well.

**What made you come up with this technology?**

Keeping in mind the most vulnerable people, we thought of coming up with such a technology that eliminates the need of using sanitiser again and again. People such as parents with kids under the age of 12, senior citizens and people with comorbidities are on our priority list.

## INBRIEF

Therapeutic food manufacturers have proposed Ready-to-Use Supplementary Foods (RUSF) as a potent way to equip HIV infected people in managing infection and its ill effects.

In a communication to National AIDS Control Organisation, CMAM Association of India has offered to work closely with the AIDS control agency and launch therapeutic products that could delay the progression of HIV to AIDS and help HIV infected people fight the illness better.

CMAM Association of India is an association of manufacturers of nutrition supplements including Ready-to-use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) and Ready-to-use Supplementary Foods (RUSF) supporting India's fight against malnutrition by manufacturing in India.

According to the CMAM Association, "Malnutrition and HIV/AIDs are known to complement each other. Malnutrition compromises the immune system and reduces the capacity of the body to fight HIV infection. Specially formulated nutrition goes a long way in improving quality of life and better survival in HIV-infected patients."



**Bollywood**  
 It is very important to understand the technique and flow of each exercise for it to be fully effective.  
 —Shilpa Shetty

# WHY INDIA NEEDS MORE WOMEN ON THE INTERNET

Women are 50 per cent less likely to have access to the world wide web than men, depriving them of benefits of information, knowledge and ingress to jobs

We all know that there is a correlation between gender equality and the digital gender divide. However, until recently, the direction and quantum of that correlation has been unclear to me.

A research published in the US National Academy of Sciences in 2018 studied Facebook data of over 1.3 billion users from over 120 territories around the world to understand the impact of Facebook on gender equality. The study found that in countries where there was a smaller gender gap on Facebook in 2015, gender equality in that country improved the following year. However, the reverse was not found to be true. The study concluded that a lower gender gap on Facebook was more likely a contributor to gender equality than a product of it.

Having said that, the digital gender gap in India stands at 50 per cent — which means that women are 50 per cent less likely to have access to the internet than men, depriving them of benefits of information, knowledge, access to jobs and markets, peer support and more.

Qualitative research from around the world shows that when you create relevant 'legit' use cases for women on the internet, it reduces other barriers such as gatekeeping by men on grounds of safety and security. For example, we asked nurses in Bihar about whether they use WhatsApp... they said they do because they have a nurses' work group where they get information, education and share experiences. But when we asked them about other platforms, they said they do not use them because they are not for work. It was clear evidence that their use of internet platforms was based on perceived legitimacy of the use case. And when women and their families find legit use cases, the other normative barriers, such as gatekeeping by men on grounds of safety and security, start to break down.

Here is an example of how a 'legit' use case of social media can transform lives. This is the story of Savita — an uneducated middle-aged farmer from Maharashtra. A few years back she got exposed to the internet and Facebook. She was fascinated by its potential. She wanted other farmers to learn what she had. So she started an online Facebook community using a basic feature phone. In under three years, she has one mil-



lion farmers in her two groups — women farmers who access information and capital, share best practices and support each other in times of crisis — all through an online group. What Savita achieved with just a feature phone and zero funds is more than what many NGOs achieve through large funded programmes. This is a true example of what technology can do for women's empowerment. And how a 'legit' use case can reduce women's barriers to internet access.

So how did Savita do what many large, funded NGOs are unable to do?

Before we get to how, it's important to understand what she did. She created a disruption. Traditional development experts would gravitate towards

the proven model of self-help groups — small physical groups of 10-15 women who meet weekly. Self-help groups are proven enablers for empowerment and social change. But at the end of the day those 10-15 women are from the same village, same community and hold similar norms. The reference group is small and static. The moment we bring millions of women from other villages, even other states, to the same group -- it completely changes and dramatically expands the reference group. It allows new ideas to blossom, new norms to thrive.

A Facebook group called Pune Ladies (PULA) brought together aspiring women entrepreneurs and that has led to over 9,000 women to start their

own businesses or grow their existing business. Digital Beti, a partnership between Facebook and CSC academy has trained over 2,50,000 women village level entrepreneurs, 70 per cent of whom were first time digital users, in basic digital skills. The programme led to an average increase of 20 per cent in the annual income of these women. Many of these outcomes are not possible at this scale, cost and speed without technology. And Savita understood that.

Technology is one of the greatest enablers of change. We all saw that during COVID-19. But we need to approach it with confidence not fear, with vision not hindsight. Try to think about where the future is headed, the

disruptions that are already happening and how legit use cases are breaking down normative barriers for women's access to the internet. Savita does not need to be an exception. While big organisations imagine the disruptions that will empower millions of women rapidly and exponentially each of us can play our small part too. Introducing a woman farmer, a house-help, a young student or a village level entrepreneur to relevant, legit use cases on the internet can transform their lives. And with every woman who joins the world wide web, the world becomes a better place.

(The author, Siddharta Swarup, is Lead, Social Impact and Communities at Facebook India.)

—IANS



## Bell Bottom feels like a comeback: Huma

Huma Qureshi says working in the forthcoming Akshay Kumar-starrer spy thriller *Bell Bottom* was special for the entire unit because it was the film they shot last year when the first unlock phase started.

"*Bell Bottom* is going to be a very special film for all of us, whether it is me or the whole cast and crew for that matter, because it was the film we shot last year when the first unlock phase started," Huma said.

"It was going back to the film set for all of us. For actors, normalcy means hearing those words, 'roll camera', 'action', 'cut', and after that long and sudden phase of staying at home, *Bell Bottom* was our first step to normalcy. It's like a comeback for everyone. We are fortunate that we finished the shoot peacefully on time. We cannot wait to share the film with the world," she added.

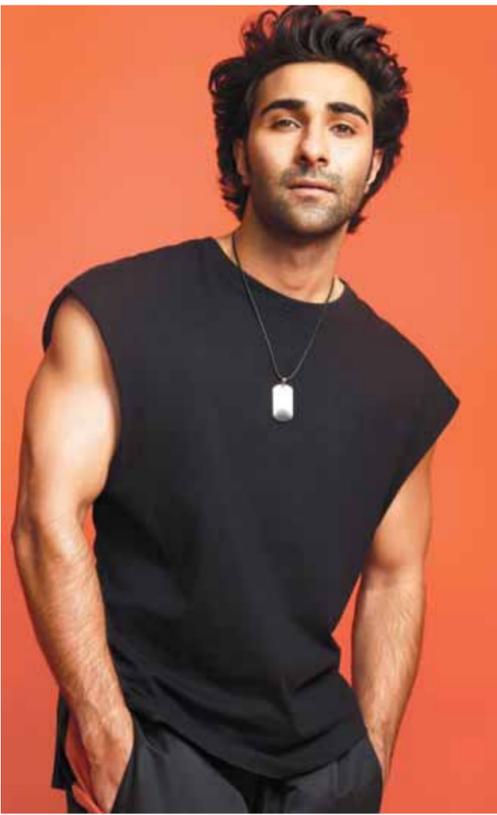
Making her Bollywood debut in 2012, with Anurag Kashyap's *Gangs Of Wasseypur*, Huma appeared in films like *D-Day*, *Dedh Ishqiya*, *Badlapur* and *Jolly LLB 2*, besides Deepa Mehta's web series *Leila*.

She looks back fondly at her debut film. "I think once *Gangs Of Wasseypur* ended, I realised what it takes to act in front of the camera. Since it was my debut, we all know that some of the finest actors of our country were part of the film. It was quite a wholesome experience," she said.

She has a special esteem for *Leila* Deepa Mehta. "She is one of those people who pushed me to an end from where I rediscovered myself as an actress," she said.

Huma's other releases coming up are the Tamil film *Valimai*, the web series *Maharani* and Zack Snyder's OTT release, *Army Of The Dead*.

# Tara loved Hello Charlie: Aadar



Actor Aadar Jain says he does not feel the pressure to deliver in the same way that his maternal grandfather, the legendary Raj Kapoor, did. He is also upbeat about his forthcoming comedy *Hello Charlie*, adding that rumoured girlfriend Tara Sutaria says it is one of her favourites.

"I have a responsibility towards my work but I don't feel any pressure that I have to achieve so much or I have to deliver in some way that my grandfather probably did in his films, the kinds of films that he made or whatever. There is no pressure from my family or my parents' side. The fact that I exist in this industry and do what I love, which is acting in Hindi cinema, I think in itself is something that my family takes a lot of pride in," Aadar said.

Aadar made his Bollywood debut with Habib Faisal's 2017 film *Qaidi Band*. The film failed to leave a mark, and his next screen appearance is the forthcoming digital film *Hello Charlie*, slated to release on April 9.

Why this gap between the two films? "My first film came out in 2017 and then in 2018, I met (*Hello Charlie* producer) Ritesh (Sidhwani) sir and (director) Pankaj (Saraswat) sir, and I auditioned. We started shooting in 2019 but because of this pandemic I feel there is an even bigger gap. 2020 just went by with-

Going forward I think I am only going to do films which I can connect to, whether it is the same genre, different, something very hatke (offbeat) or something serious, I don't know. But it has to come from within

out you knowing. So it is not really in my hands that the film came out late," he said.

In the film, Aadar plays Chirag Rastogi or Charlie, a simpleton hailing from a small town of Gujarat. Sharing his experience of shooting with a gorilla in the film, the actor

said, "I had to learn how to be with a gorilla (Toto). I had to hang with it and chill with it. He had his handlers with him but I was scared. I am an animal lover and have been to many safaris in my life but to see an animal far away and to work with it up close and to be next to it is very scary."

Aadar also opened up on rumoured girlfriend Tara Sutaria's reaction after watching the film. He said, "She has seen the film and she has really, really loved it. I think she spoke to Pankaj sir also and told him what she felt. She loved all the characters, (the film's heroine) Shlokka Pandit, the script and the fact that it is so unique and one of a kind. She's just saying already that it is one of her favourite movies!"

*Qaidi Band* and *Hello Charlie* are completely different kinds of films. What kind of genre would he like to take up next? "I have always said that I am a big fan of cinema as a whole and it includes all genres. So for me it's not pick and choose. Both the films that I have done, have chosen them from my heart, what my gut has told me. Going forward I think I am only going to do films which I can connect to, whether it is the same genre, different genre, something very hatke (offbeat) or something serious, I don't know but it has to come from within," he replied.

(The film is slated to drop on Amazon Prime Video.)

# Wanted to shoot in Ladakh: Tahir

Actor Tahir Raj Bhasin is thrilled to be shooting in Ladakh for the first time. Tahir will be in the picturesque terrain for about two weeks to shoot for his digital series *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein*.

The actor reveals, "Ladakh has an exquisite landscape and is a dream destination to shoot in. There's a vast surreal beauty that the desert mountains and altitude bring to the frame that fits the scale and vibe of the scenes. We're aiming to shoot here over the next few days for the series *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhein*. I've grown up watching films like *Lakshya*, *Jab Tak Hain Jaan*, and *3 Idiots* that have all shot iconic sequences in Ladakh and I've always wanted to shoot here in this unique terrain."

Tahir had visited Ladakh as a teenager and has amazing memories from this vacation. He says, "I was 16 years old during my last visit to Ladakh, I remember long walks and visiting Buddhist temples with my parents. I also remember an extremely picturesque drive to Pangong



Tso lake and eating some amazing *thukpa* and momos with my younger brother. I remember it being very windy and cold and so this time around I'm taking no chances and I've packed two jackets just to be safe."

Tahir has always secretly wished to return to Ladakh. He says, "Travelling is something I'm very passionate about and the year gone by of being confined to the city has only increased my long-

ing to explore and revisit different corners of our country and its varied scenic beauty."

He adds, "When a trip combines nature and the outdoors set against the backdrop of a place as special as Ladakh and all of this is in addition to fulfilling work, it truly is the complete package. I return to Ladakh after fifteen years and what better way to go back than to be shooting for a new digital series."

## TRENDBLAZER



### SHRADDHA IS 'RUNNING BACK TO NATURE'

Actor **SHRADDHA KAPOOR** is currently holidaying in picturesque Maldives. She posted a snapshot from her holiday.

In the Instagram picture, she poses next to the ocean dressed in a lime tank top paired with a white asymmetrical skirt. "Running back to nature," she wrote as caption.

Shraddha will feature in a double role for the first time in Pankaj Parashar's forthcoming film *Chaalbaaz In London*. Incidentally, Parashar had directed late superstar Sridevi in the 1989 comedy hit *Chaalbaaz*.

### fairtalk

VIPUL SHAH



When *Aankhen* was being made, a lot of people had bet on the film being a super flop. I was warned that with such a big star cast if my film didn't do well, then my career would be over. I did not listen to any of this because I had nothing to lose. I just wanted to make a film I believed in, and I did not think about success or failure. Luckily, *Aankhen* became a big success.

### dailytalk

SHASHIE VERMAA



Now people are looking for good actors and not stars. You can see actors like Ayushmann Khurrana, Vicky Kaushal, Rajkummar Rao — they all became stars because of good content. Nowadays scripts that are written are character oriented and not hero-oriented. Hence, new talents are getting opportunities.

### I WANT TO STAY HERE: SUNNY LEONE

It has been nine years now for **SUNNY LEONE** in Bollywood, almost all of it in the spotlight and, of course, she wants to stay here.

After appearing in *Bigg Boss* season 5 in 2012, she made her Bollywood debut with *Jism 2* the same year. Sunny describes the stint so far as "amazing."

"I have really put in a lot of time on myself being here, and I want to stay here. Looking forward to many more good experiences," said Sunny, who is currently busy with *MTV Splitsvilla*.



# Run out my fault, not de Kock's: Zaman

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

Pakistan opening batsman Fakhar Zaman's astonishing innings of 193 could not prevent South Africa winning the second One-Day International by 17 runs in Johannesburg on Sunday.

Pakistan seemed to have no chance when they slumped to 205 for seven in the 38th over in reply to South Africa's 341 for six at the Wanderers Stadium. But Fakhar's assault took them to 324 for nine.

With only his team's bowlers to keep him company, the left-handed Fakhar, who was on 97 when Faheem Ashraf was the seventh man out, went on all-out attack.

In all, he hit 18 fours and ten sixes in a 155-ball innings before being run out in the last over by a direct hit from long-off as he was trying for a second run.

With wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock seemingly gesturing for Aiden Markram to throw to the bowler's end, Fakhar slowed down and was surprised when the ball hit the stumps at the batsman's end when he was a metre or more short, ending his bold counter-attack.

"It was one of the best innings I have seen in my life," said Pakistan captain Babar Azam.

"It was an incredible innings, probably the best I have come across," said South African captain Temba Bavuma. "Everything he tried came off."

Fakhar, who made a ODI double century against Zimbabwe in 2018, was named player of the match.

"I tried my level best," he said. "That's my game. The wicket was really good, the boundaries were very short and the run rate was going up. I was just hitting the ball."

Fakhar admitted he was taken by surprise by his dismissal. "I was looking at Haris Rauf because I thought the run-out would be at his end. It was my own fault," he said at the post-match press conference.

"The fault was mine as I was too busy looking out for Haris Rauf at the other end as I felt he'd started off a little late from his crease, so I thought he was in trouble. The rest is up to the match referee, but I don't think it's Quinton's fault."



Pakistan opening batsman Fakhar Zaman unsuccessfully tries to complete second run during second ODI on Sunday

@CC

## IT'S UP TO UMPIRES TO DECIDE IF QDK WAS AT FAULT: MCC

Fakhar Zaman's contentious run-out in the second ODI has sparked a debate on spirit of the game with Marylebone Cricket Club saying it was "up to the umpires to decide" if Quinton de Kock had attempted to mislead the batsman.

"Law 41.5.1 states: It is unfair for any fielder wilfully to attempt, by word or action, to distract, deceive or obstruct either batsman after the striker has received the ball," the MCC, custodians of the game, tweeted.

In another, the MCC wrote, "The Law is clear, with the offence being an ATTEMPT to deceive, rather than the batsman actually being deceived. It's up to the umpires to decide if there was such an attempt. If so, then it's Not out, 5 Penalty runs + the 2 they ran, and batsmen choose who faces next ball."

The debate around de Kock's gesture was whether he was intentionally attempting to deceive Zaman into thinking that the throw was headed for

## De Kock escapes fake fielding charge

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South African wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock is unlikely to face any sanction over the run out of Fakhar Zaman during the Proteas' 17-run win in the second ODI, according to reports.

After reviewing footage of the incident, match officials are believed to have come to the conclusion that de Kock was not in breach of the law on fielders deceiving batsmen.

Officials are understood to have deemed that de Kock's actions were

not a trick and that he was indicating for the throw to go to the bowler's end.

South African fielder Tabraiz Shamsi tweeted on Monday that de Kock was calling for a fielder to back up the throw at the non-striker's end.

"QDK was NOT speaking 2 or pointing at the batsman, he was asking a fielder to back up at the non strikers end," tweeted Shamsi.

"Not Quinny's fault the batsman turned around 2 see instead of completing the run safely which he should have done."

the other end, leading to the batsman slowing down his pace while going for

the second run. Many in the Pakistan cricket circles

## Toe injury rules Shadab out

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan all-rounder Shadab Khan was on Monday ruled out of the remainder of the South Africa tour due to a toe injury that will keep him out of action for four weeks.

The Pakistan Cricket Board said that leg-spin batting all-rounder picked up the injury while batting during the second ODI against South Africa on Sunday.

The X-rays conducted following the match revealed an "intra articular communicated fracture" though there is neither any displacement nor angulation, the PCB said.

"The injury will be treated conservatively and Shadab will undergo a four-week rehab."

The PCB did not mention if Shadab would return home or remain with the touring squad.

blamed de Kock for "deliberately distracting" Zaman, leading to his dismissal.

Former captain Waqar Younis and fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar questioned the South African's act.

"What a master inning by @FakharZaman. Treat to watch. Single handedly brought the game here. Sad end to the inning. Deserved a 200. Was the spirit of the game compromised by South Africa & @QuinnyDeKock69 in that run out?" Akhtar asked in a tweet.

Waqar wrote on his Twitter handle, "Record breaking inning. Simply Outstanding @FakharZamanLive. What about this cheeky giggle from Quinton tells you?"

South African captain Temba Bavuma said de Kock's act was "quite clever".

"You've always got to look for ways especially when things are not going your way, got to find ways to turn momentum around. Quinny did that," Bavuma said.

"I don't think he broke the rules in any kind of way. It was a clever piece of cricket."

## Maha Govt allows teams to practice post 8pm at Wankhede



PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government on Monday cleared the decks for the IPL to take place in the Covid-ravaged Mumbai, allowing teams to practice after 8pm and travel to their respective hotels during the night curfew that has been imposed to contain the pandemic.

Due to the massive surge of Covid-19 cases in Mumbai and Maharashtra, the state Government on Sunday announced 'Break the Chain', under which section 144 and night-curfew from 8pm to 7am on weekdays has been imposed on entire Maharashtra, including Mumbai.

The guidelines are to be implemented from this evening.

However, the state Government has allowed the IPL teams to practice beyond 8pm, provided there is "strict adherence to bio-bubble". The event starts in Chennai on April 9.

"Considering the match-timings, teams practicing at the CCI and MCA are scheduled to practice in 2 sessions — from 4pm to 6.30pm and 7.30pm to

10pm," wrote Srirang Gholap, Under Secretary of the Disaster Management, Relief and Rehabilitation department, in a letter issued to the BCCI.

Mumbai is scheduled to host 10 matches of the IPL at the Wankhede Stadium and nine of them are scheduled to start at 7.30pm. The first game at the Wankhede is due on April 10 between Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals.

"...Permission has been requested for teams and the IPL staff (to) be allowed to practice inside the grounds after 8pm and they may be allowed free movement from the ground to their respective hotels after the said time.

"Accordingly, permission is being hereby accorded for the said request subject to scrupulous adherence to the bio-bubble," stated the letter.

### MOST GROUND-STAFF COVID-VENUE

In a related development and a major relief to the Mumbai Cricket Association, it is learnt that most of the Wankhede's 10 ground-staff members, who had earlier tested positive for the virus, have now tested negative.

## SINGLES

### HURKACZ WINS HIS BIGGEST TITLE

MIAMI: With the Big Three absent at the Miami Open, and the next generation in tennis scrambling to fill the void, it was Hubert Hurkacz who made a breakthrough. The 24-year-old Hurkacz won the biggest title of his career by beating 19-year-old Jannik Sinner of Italy 7-6 (4), 6-4 in Sunday's final. Hurkacz improved to 10-0 in Florida this year, including the Delray Beach title in January.

### SEASON OVER FOR DORTMUND'S MOKOKO

DORTMUND: Borussia Dortmund striker Youssoufa Moukoko, 16, is out for the rest of the season with a foot injury, the German club said on Monday on the eve of their Champions League quarter-final, first leg, at Manchester City. Moukoko, who became the youngest player in Champions League history last December, tore ligaments in his foot while on Germany Under-21 duty late last month.

### FLORENZI OUT OF PSG-BAYERN SHOWDOWN

MUNICH: Defender Alessandro Florenzi has become the latest PSG player to test positive for Covid-19 and will miss the Champions League game at Bayern Munich, his club tweeted on Monday. Following the "latest PCR Sars-Cov2 test, Alessandro Florenzi is confirmed positive," the club wrote on its Twitter account. The full-back joins fellow Italian Marco Verratti who has also tested positive.

### ANDREESCU CLIMBS TO SIXTH

PARIS: Bianca Andreescu climbed three places to sixth in the WTA rankings on Monday, following her run to the final where she lost to Ashleigh Barty, who remains the world number one. The 20-year-old Canadian who was forced to retire in the second set in Miami after turning her ankle, is approaching her best ranking since winning the 2019 US Open when she reached fourth.

### INDIAN WOMEN LOSE 0-1 TO UZBEKISTAN

TASHKENT: The Indian women's football team slumped to a 0-1 defeat in its first friendly against Uzbekistan, courtesy a late strike by Maftuna Shoyimova, here on Monday. While both sides created ample scoring opportunities, Uzbekistan found the back of the net with a late free-kick by Shoyimova in the 87th minute to grab the bragging rights. The Indian team will take on Belarus in the second friendly on Thursday.

### MAN UTD BEAT BRIGHTON IN PREMIER LEAGUE

MANCHESTER: Mason Greenwood completed a strong comeback by Manchester United in a 2-1 win over Brighton that strengthened the team's grip on second place in the Premier League. While Manchester City is all but certain to capture the league title, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side is looking to underline its progress by finishing as runner-up. Brighton made life difficult and United academy graduate Danny Welbeck put the visitors on course on Sunday for their first-ever league victory at Old Trafford, only for Marcus Rashford and Greenwood to reply in the second half.

### BK MITHUL WINS GOLD

NEW DELHI: BK Mithul of Mount Litera Zee School, Tiruchirappalli won Gold medal in 54-56 kg weight category Boxing event held at Pokhara in Nepal during March 16-19. The tournament — Indo-Nepal Invitational International Championship 2020-21 was organized by Nepal Youth & Sports development forum and was supported by Youth & Sports Development Association of India.



## Atletico suffer another defeat

AFP ■ SEVILLE

Atletico Madrid stumbled again in La Liga on Sunday as they were beaten 1-0 by Sevilla, giving Barcelona the chance to move to within a point of the top of the table.

Marcos Acuna headed in the winner for Sevilla at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan, with Atletico's grip on first place loosening even further and their in-form rivals primed to take advantage.

Real Madrid are only three points behind after they beat Eibar on Saturday and Barcelona will reduce their deficit from four points to one if they can win at home to Real Valladolid.

It means Spain's title race suddenly appears wide open, two months after



Atletico sat 10 points clear of both Barca and Madrid, with a game in hand.

They have managed only four wins in 12 games since then, with defeats to Chelsea costing them their place in the Champions League and regular slips in La Liga potentially squandering their shot at the title.

After a narrow 1-0 win over bottom-club Alaves two weeks ago, Diego Simeone might have hoped the international break would offer his team a chance to refresh and reset.

Instead, they returned to another setback against a determined Sevilla side, who strengthened their own hold on fourth place, even if a push for the top three would seem beyond them. Sevilla deserved their victory and it might have been more comfortable had Lucas Ocampos not missed a first-half penalty, Atletico's Jan Oblak again coming to the rescue, like he did against Alaves.

But Acuna struck with 20 minutes left, heading in a looping Jesus Navas cross, even as Atletico protested against an Ocampos handball that had occurred almost a minute before.

There was a chance for a late equaliser as Luis Suarez did brilliantly to set up Angel Correa but Sevilla's Bono, the goalkeeper who scored against Real Valladolid a fortnight ago, this time preserved the points with a smart save.

HARSHIT BISHT ■ NEW DELHI

Liverpool will travel to Madrid on Tuesday to face 13-time champions Real Madrid in the first leg of the Champions League quarter-final.

The two teams will meet for the first time since Los Blancos beat Liverpool 3-1 in 2018 final in Kyiv.

But a lot of things have changed since then.

Real will be without the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo (who now plays for Juventus) and the hero of that final — Gareth Bale, who is on loan with Spurs.

Also, they will miss the services of captain Sergio Ramos. The central defender is struggling with an injury issue of late and is expected to sideline for both legs.

In his absence, Real Madrid has suffered back to back exits in Round of 16 in the past two seasons. He was suspended for the 2019 and 2020 clash against Ajax and Manchester City respectively, which ended in defeat and knocks the Madrid club out of the competition.

However, in comparison with Real, Liverpool has won silverware in the last two seasons.

## 1st Real test for Liverpool

Klopp's men will be up against Los Blancos in away leg of CL quarters

Real Madrid vs Liverpool  
Live from 12:30am IST  
SONY TEN 2 & 3 NETWORK

In the 2019 final they beat Spurs to win the sixth European title and in the following season, ended a three-decade-old wait to win the Premier League trophy.

In between the sticks they now have Alisson Becker, who arguably is one of the best shot-stoppers in the world.

And also despite playing a majority of the season without their first choice centre-backs — Virgil Van Dijk and Joe Gomez. The Reds now look to have found stability in defence too with winter signing Ozan Kabak and Nathaniel Phillips.

The duo has kept four clean sheets in a row since they paired together.

Their solid performance at the back has allowed Fabinho to



Liverpool players Curtis Jones, left, and Mohamed Salah train ahead of Champions League quarter final first leg match against Real Madrid

@LFC

return in the midfield. And since that has happened, Liverpool looks like a better side. He is expected to be sup-

## Extra responsibility will motivate captain Pant: Ponting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting feels swash-buckling wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant will enjoy the extra responsibility of leading the side in the Indian Premier League this season.

Pant was named the captain of Delhi Capitals for the upcoming IPL after regular skipper Shreyas Iyer was ruled out of the tournament following a left shoulder injury he sustained during the recently-concluded England's tour of India.

"I think extra responsibility is going to sit really well with him. He's that sort of a person that likes the responsibility, wants to be the main man and wants to be the leader, so I am really excited to see how he goes."

"We'll help him through, but honestly, I don't think he's going to need much help at all," Ponting was quoted as saying in a release.

The former Australian captain added that it will be part



of the coaching staff and the senior players' job to support the newly appointed captain in any way they can.

"I think if we can get most of the talking with Rishabh about his captaincy done, leading into the first game then we

don't have to worry about it as the tournament starts.

"The last thing you want is to be overloading the captain with all sorts of information once the tournament is underway," he said.

"It's a big part of my job, and other coaches and senior players' job to get behind Rishabh and help him where they need to. Not only during training, but during matches as well," Ponting added.

The 23-year-old Pant has dazzled across all three formats in the international season that went by.

"I have known how talented Rishabh is since the moment I laid eyes on him. When he got back into the Test squad in Australia, I actually made a comment before a ball was bowled in the second Test match that this will be the unearthing of a 15-year Test player for India," Ponting said.

"I think he's on track for doing that. His cricket in the last six-seven months has been nothing short of breathtaking and outstanding."

### EXPECTED LINE-UPS

Real Madrid: Courtois; Vazquez, Varane, Nacho, Mendy; Modric, Casemiro, Kroos; Asensio, Benzema, Vinicius. Liverpool: Alisson; Alexander-Arnold, Phillips, Kabak, Robertson; Fabinho, Wijnaldum, Thiago; Salah, Jota, Mane.